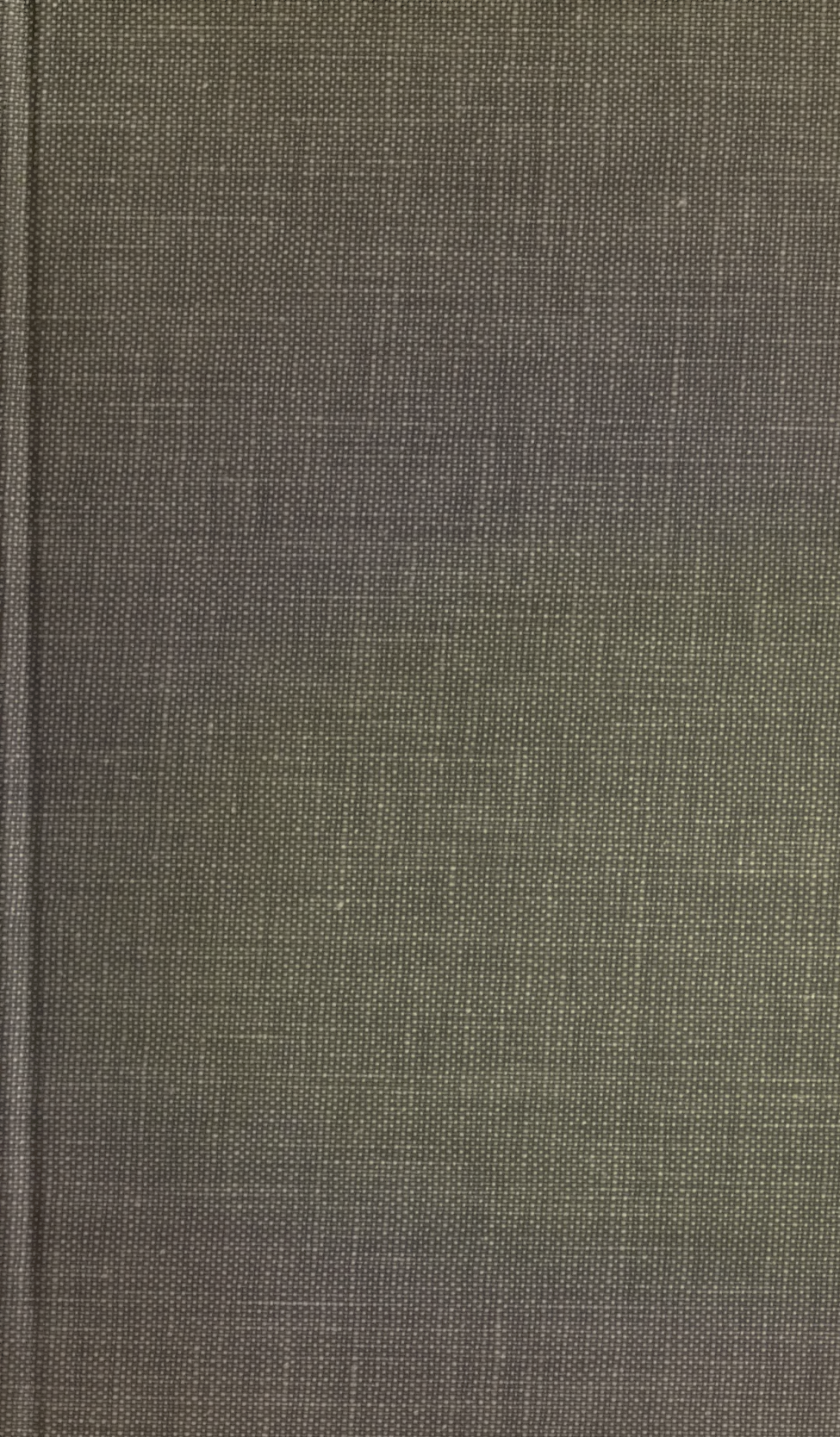






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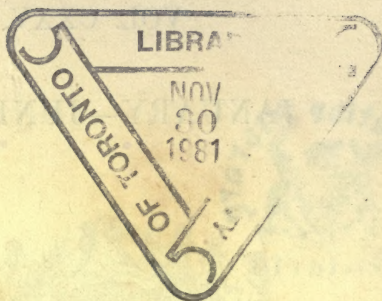
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BLACKWOOD'S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

No. DCCLIX.

JANUARY 1879.

VOL. CXXV.

THE ELECTOR'S CATECHISM.

[DEAR EBONY,—A General Election being imminent, I have been requested by the Secretary of our Liberal Committee to prepare a 'Manual of Political Information,' which might be of use to the general body of Liberal electors. The task, in present circumstances, is a delicate one, and demands the light touch and persuasive tact of an accomplished penman—a scholar, a lawyer, and a statesman. "Ce n'est pas ma phrase que je polis, mais mon idée. Je m'arrête jusqu'à ce que la goutte de lumière dont j'ai besoin soit formée et tombe de ma plume." I write as Joubert wrote. It is my ideas, not my periods, that I polish; but the drop of light? Who can make bricks without straw? Who can crystallise into epigrams the clumsy invective of the Conventicle? It is wellnigh impossible, indeed,—try as hard as one may, and I tried very hard in the late debate,—to squeeze any available political capital out of "personal rule," "bastard Imperialism," "modern Ahabs," and the other grotesque scarecrows of the demagogue. I have therefore preferred, at the outset, to renew an interrupted acquaintance with those native principles of Liberalism which, as Macaulay finely said, grow with our growth and strengthen with our strength, though they appear to have got into a rather sickly condition since we attained maturity. You may fancy, perhaps, that there is a cynical and even "brutal plainness" (as the 'Spectator,' with a tremor of virginal bashfulness at being caught in the use of such daringly masculine language, observed the other week) about some of the propositions; and that certain of the wandering stars of the Opposition are treated with a "levity" that is quite out of character with the chronic seriousness of the Company to which I belong; but knowing, as you do, how we Liberals love each other, you can understand that an occasional friendly dig at an unruly or unendurable member is not altogether unwelcome at headquarters. All this, however, is between ourselves; and as I have been mainly occupied during the past six weeks in preparing some impromptu observations for the Afghan debate, the

paper itself—which, you see, is a sort of cross between the Shorter Catechism and an examination schedule by the Civil Service Commissioners—is still in an incomplete and more or less chaotic state. So please let me have an early proof: it must be toned down (and up) a good deal before I send it to H—t—g—n. Yours, *sub rosa*, HISTRIONICUS.]

THE ELECTOR'S CATECHISM.

(With Proofs.)

§ I.—Of Patriotism.

Question. It has been maintained, my friend, by many historians, ancient and modern, that the prosperity of a State depends upon the patriotism of its citizens. What, then, is Patriotism?

Answer. Patriotism is one of the vague and emotional expressions which die out as Civilisation advances and language becomes scientific and exact. But the word being still in use among the uneducated, we may retain it in the meantime, and observe generally that Patriotism is of two kinds,—true Patriotism and false or pseudo Patriotism.

Q. How is true Patriotism manifested?

A. (a) True Patriotism embraces all men as brothers (the inhuman Turk, of course, excluded).

(b) True Patriotism abolishes the narrow limitations of race, country, and creed.

(c) True Patriotism, in the event of war between the country to which by the accident of birth we belong and a foreign State being probable, consists in declaring that our Government has been persistently and infamously in the wrong; and that, neither legally nor morally, has it a leg to stand upon. By taking this ground we minimise the chance of war; and war, in any cause, is obnoxious to the profession of a true patriot.*

(d) True Patriotism, in the event of war being imminent, consists in disclosing the moral and military weakness of our position to the enemy; and in proclaiming as emphatically as possible that the Army will be defeated, and the Ministry impeached, whenever war is declared.

(e) True Patriotism, in the event of war being declared, consists in giving the enemy such information as to the disposition of the troops, and the conduct of the campaign, as may prove serviceable to him; and in submitting in a spirit of Christian cheerfulness to any reverse that may befall our arms.

Q. Who is a true Patriot?

A. Mr Gladstone.

Q. Who is a false or pseudo Patriot?

A. The Earl of Beaconsfield.

Q. How do we know that Mr Gladstone is a true Patriot?

A. The features of the true Patriot have been traced with rare fidelity

* Even when a sulky barbarian, lying along the hills above us, becomes the Henchman of our bitterest foe, ready at any moment to fall like a hail-cloud upon the Indian plain? Of course; that is the precise moment for the display of Christian patience and "masterly inactivity."

by an incomparable pen, and cannot be improved by any later artist. Stay,—here is the passage :—

*“What ! shall a name, a word, a sound controul
The aspiring thought, and cramp the expansive soul ?
Shall one half-peopled Island's rocky round
A love, that glows for all Creation, bound ?*

*No narrow bigot He ; his reasoned view
Thy interests, England, ranks with thine, Peru !
War at our doors, he sees no danger nigh,
But heaves for Russia's woes the impartial sigh ;
A steady Patriot of the World alone,
The Friend of every Country—but his own.”*

And so on.

Q. How, on the other hand, do we know that Lord Beaconsfield is a false or pseudo Patriot ?

A. (a) Because he is “Machiavelli,” “Mephistopheles,” “Judas,” “the lineal descendant of the Impenitent Thief,” “a malignant Spirit,” “the evil genius of the Cabinet,” &c., &c., &c.*

(b) Because, though he fights fair, he hits hard.

(c) Because he suffers from “levity,” and can laugh at a joke, especially at a joke against himself.

(d) Because he has “dished the Whigs.”

(e) Because he enjoys the confidence of his Sovereign.

(f) Because he has an overwhelming majority in the House of Peers.

(g) Because he has an immense majority in the House of Commons.

(h) Because he has the Country at his back.

(i) Because he has consolidated our Colonial Empire.

(j) Because he has secured the road to India.

(k) Because he has kept the Czar out of Constantinople.

(l) Because, in short, by vindicating our national honour and extending our ancient renown, he has made us vain, arrogant, dogmatic, insufferable to our neighbours, and quite indifferent as well to those drastic measures of domestic reform which Mr Forster carries in his pocket, as to the lively Interludes and entertaining Conundrums with which Mr Gladstone enlightens and adorns ‘The Nineteenth Century.’

Q. There are many passages in the writings of the English poets which appeal to the purely local and animal instincts of the English people. Thus Shakespeare,—the High Jingo of the Surrey side in the reign of Elizabeth,—has said :—

*“I see you stand like greyhounds in the slips,
Straining upon the start : the game's afoot :
Follow your spirit ; and upon them charge ;
Cry—God for Harry ! England ! and St George.”*

And again :—

*“Come the three corners of the world in arms
And we shall shock them : nought shall make us rue
If England to herself do rest but true.”*

* See (*ad nauseam*) speeches and sermons by Messrs Freeman, Baldwin Brown, Malcolm MacColl, &c. It is pleasant to reflect, however, that Mr Gladstone has never applied a single uncomplimentary epithet to his illustrious rival.

And again :—

“England is safe *if true within itself.*”

And again :—

“O England, model to thy inward greatness,
Like little body with a mighty heart,
What mightst thou do, that honour would thee do,
Were all thy children kind and natural?”

And again, with even more brutal ferocity :—

“*May he be suffocate
That dims the honour of this warlike Isle!*”

It is obvious that these and similar passages are calculated to provoke a pugnacious spirit in the people to whom they are addressed. Can any measures be taken to arrest the mischief?

A. The Patriotic Poets (falsely so called*) should be brought within the provisions of Lord Campbell's Act for the suppression of indecent publications; and, in the meantime, a purged edition of their works (from which Henry V., Faulconbridge, and other dangerous characters, are excluded) might be published by authority—Mr Edward Jenkins, Editor.

§ II.—*Of the Earnest Politician.*

Q. You have heard, I daresay, that a Liberal statesman must be an earnest politician as well as a true patriot. What, then, is an Earnest Politician?

A. An Earnest Politician is a man who has received a commission from within to promulgate the Truth, and who does not permit any weak or compassionate scruples to retard its progress. An earnest politician keeps no terms with unbelievers, and burns the accursed thing with fire before the altar,—unless, indeed, it can be made to pay, in which case true religion and sound economy counsel its preservation.†

Q. Mention the names of some eminent earnest politicians.

A. Jacob, who deprived Esau of his birthright; Samuel, who hewed Agag in pieces before the Lord in Gilgal; Jael; Judith; Praise-God Barebones, and Mrs Brownrigg.‡ In our own age, with the exception of Mr Gladstone and Mr Freeman, earnest politicians are to be found mainly among the intelligent operatives of the Scottish Burghs, who

* They were called Patriots in the Elizabethan age; now they are called “Jingoes.”

† An earnest politician has been otherwise defined as a man of the believing temperament without a single conviction that will stand a strain. But I don't see the prudence of putting it in this light—some of our High Church friends might not like it.

‡ Is this the heroine immortalised by Canning?—

“Dost thou ask her crime?
SHE WHIPPED TWO FEMALE 'PRENTICES TO DEATH,
AND HID THEM IN THE COAL-HOLE. For her mind
Shaped strictest plans of discipline—sage schemes!
Such as LYCURGUS taught when at the shrine
Of the Orthyian goddess he bade flog
The little Spartans,—such as erst chastised
Our MILTON when at college. For this act
Did Brownrigg swing. Harsh laws! But time shall come
When France shall reign and laws be all repealed.”

have not been demoralised by the effeminate habits of an aristocracy, nor corrupted by the leading articles of the metropolitan press.*

§ III.—Of Political Parties.

Q. What is the Tory party?

A. The party which is ignorantly and stupidly wedded to the political abuses and the religious fictions of the Past.

Q. What is "the Past"?

A. The Past is Nothing. What does not exist is nothing; the past does not exist; therefore the past is nothing.

Q. What is the Liberal party?

A. The party of Sweetness and Light,—the party which seeks and secures the greatest happiness of the greatest number. (No Turk, however, need apply.)

Q. What are Liberal Principles?

A. The Right of Private Judgment, Toleration, Unsectarian Education, Religious Liberty, Religious Equality.

Q. What is the Right of Private Judgment?

A. The Right of Private Judgment is the privilege and obligation of every right-minded citizen to think as Mr Bright thinks.

Q. What is Toleration?

A. Toleration is the process by which this obligation is enforced.

Q. What is Religious Liberty?

A. Religious Liberty is the inherent and inalienable right of an advanced and earnest Liberal to punish Error and propagate the Truth.

Q. What is "the Truth"?

A. Truth is the latest phase of Liberal opinion, and is to be found mainly in the writings of Mr Gladstone, Canon Liddon, and the Rev. Malcolm MacColl.

Q. What is Religious Equality? and how is it attained?

A. (a) Religious Equality is attained by disestablishing and disendowing the Church, and devoting its revenues to the promotion of schemes of real utility—such as the construction of roads and bridges, lunatic asylums, prisons, anti-vaccination societies, and lying-in hospitals.†

(b) It is also attained by withdrawing the privilege of teaching religion in the national schools from the national teachers of religion; and by transferring it to "Tom, Dick, and Harry" (to use a convenient colloquialism), as representing the majority of electors in any parish who are not in arrear of their rates on the first day of April in any year.

Q. What is Liberal and Unsectarian Education?

A. Liberal education is reading, writing, and arithmetic as far as vulgar fractions; and Unsectarian education is instruction in that manual of unsectarian doctrinal divinity—the Old Light Catechism, the New Light Confession—whereof "Tom, Dick, and Harry," as representing the majority of electors aforesaid, approve.

* To these names may we not add that of the eminent Scotch Collie, (could it be recovered,—perhaps "Rab's" friend might know—or is it "Rab" himself?) of whom his master remarked, "Life's fu' o' *sarriousness* to him; he just never can get eneuch o' *fechtinn*!"?

† See the schedule to the first edition of the Irish Church Bill (1869).

Q. How are Liberal Principles to be carried into practice ?

A. By the Liberal Party regaining Office.

Q. How is Office to be regained ?

A. By "sinking" minor differences of opinion.

Q. What are "minor differences of opinion" ?

A. The opinions of the Moderate members of the Party.*

Q. What are the specific results of the Liberal party being in office ?

A. Remunerative wages ; abundant harvests ; Liberty, Equality, Fraternity ; and mutton at 6d. a pound.

Q. What are the fruits of Tory rule ?

A. The Cattle Plague ; the epidemic of measles ; the wet summer of 1877 ; the failure of the City of Glasgow Bank ; the eruption of Mount Vesuvius ; and the Bulgarian atrocities.†

§ IV.—Of Atrocities.

Q. What is an "atrocious" ?

A. An "atrocious" is an outrage committed by a Turk upon a member of the Orthodox Eastern Church. An "atrocious" cannot be committed by a Russian or a Bulgarian. No amount of evidence can establish what is intrinsically incredible ; and any evidence showing that "atrocious" have been committed by Russians and Bulgarians is necessarily worthless.—(See Hume on Miracles.)

§ V.—Of the Church of Ireland.

Q. What is Mr Gladstone's greatest achievement ?

A. The abolition of the Irish Church.

Q. Why did Mr Gladstone abolish the Irish Church ?

A. (a) Because Sir Robert Peel increased the grant to Maynooth.

(b) Because Archbishop Laud was beheaded.

(c) Because the rack and thumb-screws had been discontinued.

(d) Because Dissenters and Nonconformists had been made eligible for civil office.

(e) Because the children of Israel had been admitted to Parliament.

(f) Because Mr Disraeli carried an Act for amending the representation of the people.

(g) Because an Established Church is an anachronism in a country which is governed on popular principles.

* Or it might be put thus :—

Q. How is Office to be regained ?

A. By sinking minor points of difference.

Q. What are minor points of difference ?

A. The points about which Liberals differ.

† See Sir William Vernon Harcourt's admirable speech during the Afghan debate. The passage begins thus : "In the policy of the Government they had hoisted the old red flag of Toryism, and they all knew the crew that sailed beneath it. It was a gaunt and grisly company, whose names were war, taxation, poverty, and distress. But the flag of the Liberal party bore very different messages—peace, retrenchment, and reform," &c., &c.

(h) Because the Church had been made tolerant and comprehensive, a teacher of righteousness and not an engine of oppression.

(i) Because in these circumstances the State had assumed a position of practical atheism, and had forfeited its right to inculcate the Truth.

(j) Because the Reformation had destroyed the Unity of Christendom.*

§ VI.—*Of the Church of England.*

Q. Why is Mr Gladstone going to abolish the Church of England?

A. Because what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander.

§ VII.—*Of the Church of Scotland.*

Q. When is the Church of Scotland to be disestablished?

A. Whenever its disestablishment will heal the divisions in the Liberal party, and furnish an effective rallying-cry to its local agents and its central Committee.

Q. Why is the Church of Scotland to be disestablished?

A. (a) Because it is the only Church in which "free" thought and "rational" religion are encouraged.

(b) Because the number of its adherents is increasing with alarming rapidity.

(c) Because the next census of the population is to be taken in 1881. "If it were done, 'twere well it were done quickly."

(d) Because you can take the breeks off a Highlander without causing him any sensible inconvenience.

(e) Because its ministers being already accustomed to apostolic poverty, a little more or less starvation is of no consequence.

(f) Because it has divested itself or been divested of the exceptional privileges which it used to enjoy—*e. g.*, the privilege of burning and drowning witches, and of enforcing civil penalties against unbelievers.

(g) Because it has adopted the principle of popular election.

(h) Because the Church of Knox is an obnoxiously Protestant Church.

(i) Because it is schismatic in its origin, and an obstacle to the reunion of Christendom on the basis of the Council of Ephesus.

(j) Because it is not a Church in any real sense of the word. Not being a Church in any real sense of the word, the civil fiction should no longer be maintained.

(k) Because Principal Tulloch, Professor Flint, and Dr Story have pretended to refute the arguments of the Liberation Society.

(l) Because it has invited its Nonconformist brethren to partake of its ordinances and to share its emoluments.

(m) Because, being the most venerable institution in the country and identified with whatever is characteristic in the history of the people, it encourages a spirit of provincial patriotism which is inconsistent with the aspirations of Cosmopolitan Philanthropy.

* See A Chapter of Autobiography. By the Right. Hon. W. E. Gladstone, M.P. London: 1869. Pages 18, 25, 30, 46, 66.

(n) Because Mr DICK PEDDIE is a candidate for the Kilmarnock Burghs.

§ VIII.—Of Colonies.

Q. What are Colonies?

A. Colonies are like plums,—they drop from the parent tree when they attain maturity. It is the duty of a wise statesman to see that they do not remain after they are ripe; otherwise they will rot.

Q. How is the separation of the Colonies from the Mother Country to be effected?

A. A despatch by Earl Granville or the Duke of Argyll has frequently produced a sound and healthy irritation of the Colonial mind; but it is believed that the appointment of the Right Hon. Robert Lowe to the Colonial Secretaryship would, without delay, secure the object in view. In the meantime something may be done by extending Manhood Suffrage among the Maoris, and giving the Fiji Islanders, under the maternal government of Sir Arthur Gordon, the benefit of cheap newspapers and Trial by Jury.

§ IX.—Of the Empire of India.

Q. Where is India?

A. Somewhere on the other side of the Globe.

Q. What is our Indian Empire?

A. "A hideous nightmare"—"a creature of monstrous birth"—"a regular Old Man of the Sea."

Q. By whom is it governed?

A. It is governed by needy and profligate aristocrats, who are sent abroad by their friends in the Cabinet to relieve them from the importunities of English creditors.

Q. How is it governed?

A. The Government of India is the most intolerable despotism of which oriental history contains any record. (Consult *passim* the order of the Governor-General in Council, restraining the free and honest expression of native opinion in the vernacular prints.)

Q. What should we do with India?

A. Three courses—here as elsewhere—are open to us. We may remain till we are driven out by the Native Princes; or we may request Shere Ali, the accomplished and pacific ruler of Afghanistan, to undertake its administration; or we may sell it to Russia. The last course appears to be the best; it is recommended alike by self-respect and economy. We shall feel when we leave that we have consulted the interests of the people of India and—our own.

Q. But assuming that we elect to remain, what is the policy which, in view of the rapid advance of the Czar and the unhappy disposition of the Ameer, the Liberal Party would be inclined to advocate?

A. The policy of "masterly inactivity."

Q. What is "masterly inactivity"?

A. Shutting the stable-door when the steed is stolen.

§ X.—*Of the Divine Figure of the North.*

Q. Speaking of Russia,—Who is “the Divine Figure of the North”?

A. Mythologically, Odin the God of War. At present, the Czar.

Q. Why is the Czar “a Divine Figure”?

A. (a) Because he is the head of the orthodox Greek Church.

(b) Because he chastises the weaker vessels,—not sparing the rod, as the Scripture advises.

(c) Because he sends inconvenient editors of metropolitan newspapers to the Siberian Mines.

(d) Because he has piously admitted the people of Poland into the communion of the orthodox Church. (*Mem.*—What is a little temporal and temporary uncomfortableness compared with eternal damnation?)*

(e) Because he extinguished the Hungarian Revolt, and introduced Law and Order among a disorderly and distracted people unable to govern themselves.

(f) Because he ordered the unspeakable Turk to surrender the anarchical Kossuth and his companions.

(g) Because he was distressed by the Bulgarian atrocities, and shocked by the absence of local government, and parliamentary representation and control, at Constantinople and throughout the dominions of the Turk.

(h) Because he has an army of a million and a half, and is much stronger than any of his neighbours.

(i) Because Providence is on the side of the big battalions.

(j) Because it is sheer impiety to fly in the face of Providence.

(k) Because the success of his arms has sensibly diminished the number of unbelievers.

§ XI.—*Of Imperialism.*

Q. You were kind enough, my friend, at an early period of our conversation, to define Patriotism. We have heard of late also a good deal about “Imperialism,” “Bastard Imperialism,” and “Personal Rule.” What, then, is “Imperialism,” and wherein does it differ from “Bastard Imperialism”?

A. True Imperialism has been defined in eloquent words by an illustrious statesman,—

“I see one vast confederation stretching from the frozen North to the glowing

* The Czar’s anxious interest in the eternal welfare of this unfortunate and misguided people assumes at times an air of almost ludicrous solicitude—*e. g.*, “The Russian authorities in the district of Lubin tolerate no baptism according to the rites of the Romish Church. The Roman Catholics are therefore obliged to carry their children across the border in order to have them baptised by priests of their own communion at Cracow. Even this resource, however, is now denied them; for the Russian Governor-General, having been informed of the practice, recently caused the persons crossing the frontier to be intercepted and seized by gendarmes, who took the children to the nearest orthodox church and had them forcibly baptised by the Russian Pope. The parents, it is added, wishing to invalidate the Russian baptism, carry their children to the nearest well, in order to wash away as expeditiously as possible the effects of the enforced rite.”—Daily Papers, Nov. 20, 1878.

South, and from the wild billows of the Atlantic westward to the calmer waters of the Pacific main; and I see one people, and one language, and one law, and over all that wide continent the home of freedom, and a refuge for the oppressed of every race and of every clime."

Q. One moment, please. That is a peroration by Mr Bright, if I am not mistaken?—a great "oot-brak," as they say in Scotland; but might not this Pæan or Hymn of Victory be used or abused by the reckless and the malignant to glorify the policy which Lord Bolingbroke—Lord Beaconsfield, I mean—has pursued since he turned us out of office?

A. Not so; for the words I have read were addressed to the Maiden Republic of the West.

Q. The United States? Then "Bastard Imperialism" is——

A. The same line of policy when adopted by a King or an Oligarchy. Imperialism may be practised by the severe and incorruptible Demagogues of a Democracy;* it is repugnant to the narrow traditions of monarchical rule. A Queen who was educated by a German Dryasdust, and whose Cabinet is controlled by a mercenary Jew, cannot be permitted to share the sublime aspirations—the generous transports—of the Republic.†

Q. By what standard, then, ought the "Imperial" duties and obligations of England to be measured?

A. By Distance.

Q. What is the central political Observatory from which distance for this purpose should be calculated?

A. Rochdale.

Q. How is the principle applied?

A. Arithmetically. Thus: Penzance is further from Rochdale than Rochdale is from Stockport; therefore the interest of Rochdale in Penzance is more remote than in Stockport. If a foreign army were to land at Penzance, it might possibly in time arrive at Rochdale: the Government may therefore be justified—practically, if not morally—in declining to facilitate the disembarkation of a foreign army at Penzance (especially as the disembarkation would complicate the accounts of the Collector of

* There is a prejudice against the word "demagogue" among certain people who are ignorant of its true derivation, and Mr Lowe on one occasion, turning to an eminent member of the Liberal Party, exclaimed—"Demagogues are the commonplace of history. They are to be found wherever popular commotion has prevailed, and they all bear to one another a strong family likeness. Their names float lightly on the stream of time; they are in some way handed down to us, but then they are as little regarded as is the foam which rides on the crest of the stormy wave and bespatters the rock which it cannot shake." But when these words were uttered, Mr Lowe was in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity. The old prophets, indeed, were mainly demagogues—translating the sublime but inarticulate passion of the people into red-hot invective. It is true that they had some false and peculiar notions about the ability of the people to *misgovern* themselves. "The right divine of mobs to govern wrong" is *now*, however, universally conceded.

† This is a safer line of argument, I think, than that which maintains that Imperialism is a word unknown in English literature, and that an Imperial policy is an "un-English" policy. It happens, unfortunately, that the great English poet Edmund Spenser dedicated 'The Faerie Queen' to "the most high, mightie, and magnificent *Empresse* Elizabeth,"—the "imperial votress" of a yet greater Englishman. Spenser and Shakespeare, to be sure, lived before the era of authentic history,—which begins with the Reform Bill; and they had not seen the "Vacation Speeches" of Mr Mountstuart Elphinstone Grant Duff, or Mr Dunckley's article in 'The Nineteenth Century,'—else they would have known better.

Customs at that port). But the interest of Rochdale in (say) Jersey is too intangible and speculative to justify us in resisting the occupation, by France or Germany, of the Channel Islands. Malta is more distant than Jersey; and Constantinople, the Suez Canal, and Bombay are at an altogether incalculable distance. On the whole, the Imperial obligations of England cannot clearly be said to extend beyond the English Channel—opposite Dover.

Q. Would it be advisable to appoint a Geographical Member of the Cabinet, who (armed with compasses and a map) could advise his colleagues *where* an Imperial obligation began and *where* it ended?

A. The proposal will be thankfully considered whenever the Liberal Party returns to office.

§ XII.—Of Personal Rule.

Q. What, lastly, is “personal government”?

A. Government by persons.

Q. What are the alternatives to “personal government”?

A. Government by “houses,” or government by “vestries.”

Q. The Whig “houses,” however, being now practically out of the field, the choice appears to lie between “persons” and “vestries.” Which is to be preferred?

A. Government by vestries.*

Q. What are the objections to personal rule?

A. Personal rule is only possible in the person of a sovereign or statesman of unusual capacity; and unusual capacity (that is to say, capacity above the average) ought to be sedulously discouraged in a country where, by law, one man is as good as another. Great enterprises, it is true, cannot be carried out except by great men; but it is to be remarked that when a nation embarks on a great enterprise it commonly comes to grief, more especially if it is blessed with popular institutions. Either the enterprise fails, because the people are lukewarm and divided, or because the popular assembly, losing patience, grows clamorous for economy or reckless for action; or it succeeds, and the Constitutional Minister becomes a Military Dictator. By confining its attention to the business of money-making, a nation runs none of these risks; and if, in consequence of its alleged want of enterprise and public spirit, it should come to be despised (and ultimately annexed) by its neighbours, there is then all the greater scope for cultivating the Christian grace of humility.

Q. Mention some recent and outrageous instances of the exercise of personal rule.

A. The acquisition of the Suez Canal; the loan of Six Millions; the calling-out of the Reserves; the despatch of the Mediterranean fleet to the Dardanelles; the employment of Indian troops at Malta.

Q. In what way were these measures injurious and disastrous?

A. They were the means of arresting the advance of the Russian troops, and they prevented the Czar from carrying out his civilising Mission within the walls of Constantinople.

* Sometimes known as “Committees,”—e. g., the St James’s Hall Committee, the Tooley Street Committee, the Afghan Committee, &c., &c.

Q. How would government by vestries have kept our rulers from taking these unbecoming and unpatriotic precautions?

A. Each of these measures was adopted *just a day too soon*. Had Lord Beaconsfield been required to disclose his plans before they were formed* (or matured), the sanction of the many vestries throughout the country could not have been obtained under from four to six months,—a delay which would have afforded the Czar ample leisure to complete his benevolent labours.

Q. But is government by the House of Commons equivalent to government by vestries?

A. The House of Commons is a select vestry; and though its composition is in some measure corrupt and aristocratic, there are yet many true Patriots and earnest Liberals within its walls who would have been prepared to use its forms to stay the progress of an obnoxious measure. Moreover, if the House of Commons had been consulted by a Constitutional Minister who had asked it (as he would have done) to assist him in making up his mind, it is barely possible that the Czar might, through the daily newspapers or otherwise, have obtained an inkling of what was going on, and have taken his measures accordingly.

Q. Exactly; but in the event (if such an assumption is admissible) of a Liberal Minister hereafter despatching a Confidential Mission or a Secret Expedition, might not the observance of these constitutional forms be attended with practical inconvenience?

A. No. For, of course, a Liberal Minister can at any time, without danger to the Public Liberties, have recourse to the Royal Prerogative.

§ XIII.—*Of the Future State.*

Q. Then it would appear, as the sum of the whole matter, that the Liberal Party may regard the Future without anxiety, and in a spirit of subdued and chastened cheerfulness?

A. Most assuredly. The Great Soul of Liberalism is Sound. There may be a smutch here and a blotch there,—venial inconsistencies and skin-deep antagonisms; but, as the Pomeranian Schoolmaster said, when he excused himself for attending a funeral in a red waistcoat,—“What does it signify, reverend sir, when one’s heart is black?” No, my friend, we need not despair of—the REPUBLIC.

* “Had you seen these roads before they were made,
You would hold up your hands and bless General Wade.”

As the Czar would no doubt have done had General Gladstone been in command.

JOHN CALDIGATE.—PART X.

CHAPTER XXXVII.—AGAIN AT FOLKING.

THUS Hester prevailed, and was taken back to the house of the man who had married her. By this time very much had been said about the matter publicly. It had been impossible to keep the question,—whether John Caldigate's recent marriage had been true or fraudulent,—out of the newspapers; and now the attempt that had been made to keep them apart by force gave an additional interest to the subject. There was an opinion, very general among elderly educated people, that Hester ought to have allowed herself to be detained at the Grange. "We do not mean to lean heavily on the unfortunate young lady," said the 'Isle-of-Ely-Church-Intelligencer'; "but we think that she would have better shown a becoming sense of her position had she submitted herself to her parents till the trial is over. Then the full sympathy of all classes would have been with her; and whether the law shall restore her to a beloved husband, or shall tell her that she has become the victim of a cruel seducer, she would have been supported by the approval and generous regard of all men." It was thus for the most part that the elderly and the wise spoke and thought about it. Of course they pitied her; but they believed all evil of Caldigate, declaring that he too was bound by a feeling of duty to restore the unfortunate one to her father and mother until the matter should have been set at rest by the decision of a jury.

But the people,—especially the people of Utterden and Netherden, and of Chesterton, and even of Cambridge,—were all on the side of Caldigate and Hester as a married

couple. They liked the persistency with which he had claimed his wife, and applauded her to the echo for her love and firmness. Of course the scene at Puritan Grange had been much exaggerated. The two nights were prolonged to intervals varying from a week to a fortnight. During that time she was said always to have been at the window holding up her baby. And Mrs Bolton was accused of cruelties which she certainly had not committed. Some details of the affair made their way into the metropolitan press,—so that the expected trial became one of those *causes célèbres* by which the public is from time to time kept alive to the value and charm of newspapers.

During all this John Caldigate was specially careful not to seclude himself from public view, or to seem to be afraid of his fellow-creatures. He was constantly in Cambridge, generally riding thither on horseback, and on such occasions was always to be seen in Trumpington Street and Trinity Street. Between him and the Boltons there was, by tacit consent, no intercourse whatever after the attempted imprisonment. He never showed himself at Robert Bolton's office, nor when they met in the street did they speak to each other. Indeed at this time no gentleman or lady held any intercourse with Caldigate, except his father and Mr Bromley the clergyman. The Babingtons were strongly of opinion that he should have surrendered the care of his wife; and aunt Polly went so far as to write to him when she first heard of the affair at Chesterton, recommending him very

strongly to leave her at the Grange. Then there was an angry correspondence, ended at last by a request from aunt Polly that there might be no further intercourse between Babington and Folking till after the trial.

Caldigate, though he bore all this with an assured face, with but little outward sign of inward misgiving, suffered much,—much even from the estrangement of those with whom he had hitherto been familiar. To be “cut” by any one was a pain to him. Not to be approved of, not to be courted, not to stand well in the eyes of those around him, was to him positive and immediate suffering. He was supported, no doubt, by the full confidence of his father, by the friendliness of the parson, and by the energetic assurances of partisans who were all on his side,—such as Mr Ralph Holt, the farmer. While Caldigate had been in Cambridge waiting for his wife’s escape, Holt and one or two others were maturing a plan for breaking into Puritan Grange, and restoring the wife to her husband. All this supported him. Without it he could hardly have carried himself as he did. But with all this, still he was very wretched. “It is that so many people should think me guilty,” he said to Mr Bromley.

She bore it better;—though, of course, now that she was safe at Folking, she had but little to do as to outward bearing. In the first place, no doubt as to his truth ever touched her for a moment,—and not much doubt as to the result of the trial. It was to her an assured fact that John Caldigate was her husband, and she could not realise the idea that, such being the fact, a jury should say that he was not. But let all that be as it might, they two were one; and to adhere to him in every word, in every thought, in

every little action, was to her the only line of conduct possible. She heard what Mr Bromley said, she knew what her father-in-law thought, she was aware of the enthusiasm on her side of the folk at Folking. It seemed to her that this opposition to her happiness was but a continuation of that which her mother had always made to her marriage. The Boltons were all against her. It was a terrible sorrow to her. But she knew how to bear it bravely. In the tenderness of her husband, who at this time was very tender to her, she had her great consolation.

On the day of her return she had been very ill,—so ill that Caldigate and his father had been much frightened. During the journey home in the carriage, she had wept and laughed hysterically, now clutching her baby, and then embracing her husband. Before reaching Folking she had been so worn with fatigue that he had hardly been able to support her on the seat. But after rest for a day or two, she had rallied completely. And she herself had taken pleasure and great pride in the fact that through it all her baby had never really been ill. “He is a little man,” she said, boasting to the boy’s father, “and knows how to put up with troubles. And when his mamma was so bad, he didn’t peak and pine and cry, so as to break her heart. Did he, my own, own brave little man?” And she could boast of her own health too. “Thank God, I am strong, John. I can bear things which would break down other women. You shall never see me give way because I am a poor creature.” Certainly she had a right to boast that she was not a poor creature.

Caldigate no doubt was subject to troubles of which she knew nothing. It was quite clear to him that Mr Seely, his own lawyer,

did in truth believe that there had been some form of marriage between him and Euphemia Smith. The attorney had never said so much,—had never accused him. It would probably have been opposed to all the proprieties in such a matter that any direct accusation should have been made against him by his own attorney. But he could understand from the man's manner that his mind was at any rate not free from a strong suspicion. Mr Seely was eager enough as to the defence; but seemed to be eager as against opposing evidence rather than on the strength of evidence on his own side. He was not apparently desirous of making all the world know that such a marriage certainly never took place; but that, whether such a marriage had taken place or not, the jury ought not to trust the witnesses. He relied, not on the strength of his own client, but on the weakness of his client's adversaries. It might probably be capable of proof that Crinkett and Adamson and the woman had conspired together to get money from John Caldigate; and if so, then their evidence as to the marriage would be much weakened. And he showed himself not averse to any tricks of trade which might tend to get a verdict. Could it be proved that Tom Crinkett had been dishonest in his mining operations? Had Euphemia Smith allowed her name to be connected with that of any other man in Australia? What had been her antecedents? Was it not on the cards that Allan, the minister, had never undergone any ceremony of ordination? And, if not, might it not be shown that a marriage service performed by him would be no marriage service at all? Could not the jury be made to think,—or at least some of the jury,—that out there, in that rough

lawless wilderness, marriage ceremonies were very little understood? These were the wiles to which he seemed disposed to trust; whereas Caldigate was anxious that he should instruct some eloquent indignant advocate to declare boldly that no English gentleman could have been guilty of conduct so base, so dastardly, and so cruel! "You see, Mr Caldigate," the lawyer said on one occasion, "to make the best of it, our own hands are not quite clean. You did promise the other lady marriage."

"No doubt. No doubt I was a fool; and I paid for my folly. I bought her off. Having fallen into the common scrape,—having been pleased by her prettinesses and clevernesses and women's ways,—I did as so many other men have done. I got out of it as best I could without treachery and without dishonour. I bought her off. Had she refused to take my money, I should probably have married her,—and probably have blown my brains out afterwards. All that has to be acknowledged,—much to my shame. Most of us would have to blush if the worst of our actions were brought out before us in a court of law. But there was an end of it. Then they come over here and endeavour to enforce their demand for money by a threat."

"That envelope is so unfortunate," said the lawyer.

"Most unfortunate."

"Perhaps we shall get some one before the day comes who will tell the jury that any marriage up at Ahalala must have been a farce."

All this was unsatisfactory, and became so more and more as the weeks went by. The confidential clerk whom the Boltons had sent out when the first threat reached them early in November,—the threat conveyed in that letter from the woman which Caldigate had

shown to Robert Bolton,—returned about the end of March. The two brothers, Robert and William, decided upon sending him to Mr Seely, so that any information obtained might be at Caldigate's command, to be used, if of any use, in his defence. But there was, in truth, very little of it. The clerk had been up to Nobble and Ahalala, and had found no one there who knew enough of the matter to give evidence about it. The population of mining districts in Australia is peculiarly a shifting population, so that the most of those who had known Caldigate and his mode of life there were gone. The old woman who kept Henniker's Hotel at Nobble had certainly heard that they were married; but then she had added that many people there called themselves man and wife from convenience. A woman would often like a respectable name where there was no parson near at hand to entitle her to it. Then the parsons would be dilatory, and troublesome, and expensive; and a good many people were apt to think that they could do very well without ceremonies. She evidently would have done no good to either side as a witness. This clerk had found Ahalala almost deserted,—occupied chiefly by a few Chinese, who were contented to search for the specks of gold which more ambitious miners had allowed to slip through their fingers. The woman had certainly called herself Mrs Caldigate, and had been called so by many. But she had afterwards been called Mrs Crinkett, when she and Crinkett had combined their means with the view of buying the Polyeuka mine. She was described as an enterprising, greedy woman, upon whom the love of gold had had almost more than its customary effect. And she had for a while been noted and courted

for her success, having been the only female miner who was supposed to have realised money in these parts. She had been known to the banks at Nobble, also even at Sydney; and had been supposed at one time to have been worth twenty or perhaps thirty thousand pounds. Then she had joined herself with Crinkett, and all their money had been supposed to vanish in the Polyeuka mine. No doubt there had been enough in that to create animosity of the most bitter kind against Caldigate. He in his search for gold had been uniformly successful,—was spoken of among the Nobble miners as the one man who in gold-digging had never had a reverse. He had gone away just before the bad time came on Polyeuka; and then had succeeded, after he had gone, in extracting from these late unfortunate partners of his every farthing that he had left them! There was ample cause for animosity.

Allan, the minister, who certainly had been at Ahalala, was as certainly dead. He had gone out from Scotland as a Presbyterian clergyman, and no doubt had ever been felt as to his being that which he called himself;—and a letter from him was produced, which had undoubtedly been written by himself. Robert Bolton had procured a photograph of the note which the woman produced as having been written by Allan to Caldigate. The handwriting did not appear to him to be the same, but an expert had given an opinion that they both might have been written by the same person. Of Dick Shand no tidings had been found. It was believed that he had gone from Queensland to some of the Islands,—probably to the Fijis; but he had sunk so low among men as to have left no trace behind him. In Australia no one cares to know

whence a shepherd has come or whither he goes. A miner belongs to a higher class, and is more considered. The result of all which was, in the opinion of the Boltons, adverse to John Caldigate. And in discussing this with his client, Mr Seely acknowledged that nothing had as yet come to light sufficient to shake the direct testimony of the woman, corroborated as it was by three persons, all of whom would swear that they had been present at the marriage.

"No doubt they endeavoured to get money from you," said Mr Seely; "and I may be well assured in my own mind that money was their sole object. But then it cannot be denied that their application to you for money had a sound basis,—one which, though you might fairly refuse to allow it, takes away from the application all idea of criminality. Crinkett has never asked for money as a bribe to hold his tongue. In a matter of trade between them and you, you were very successful; they were very unfortunate. A man asking for restitution in such circumstances will hardly be regarded as dishonest."

It was to no purpose that Caldigate declared that he would willingly have remitted a portion of the money had he known the true circumstances. He had not done so, and now the accusation was made. The jury, feeling that the application had been justifiable, would probably keep the two things distinct. That was Mr Seely's view; and thus, in these days, Caldigate gradually came to hate Mr Seely. There was no comfort to be had from Mr Seely.

Mr Bromley was much more comfortable, though, unfortunately, in such a matter less to be trusted.

"As to the minister's handwriting," he said, "that will go for

nothing. Even if he had written the note——"

"Which he didn't," said Caldigate.

"Exactly. But should it be believed to have been his, it would prove nothing. And as to the envelope, I cannot think that any jury would disturb the happiness of a family on such evidence as that. It all depends on the credibility of the people who swear that they were present; and I can only say that were I one of the jury, and were the case brought before me as I see it now, I certainly should not believe them. There is here one letter to you, declaring that if you will comply with her demands, she will not annoy you, and declaring also her purpose of marrying some one else. How can any jurymen believe her after that?"

"Mr Seely says that twelve men will not be less likely to think me a bigamist because she has expressed her readiness to commit bigamy; that, if alone, she would not have a leg to stand upon, but that she is amply corroborated; whereas I have not been able to find a single witness to support me. It seems to me that in this way any man might be made the victim of a conspiracy."

Then Mr Bromley said that all that would be too patent to a jury to leave any doubt upon the matter. But John Caldigate himself, though he took great comfort in the society of the clergyman, did in truth rely rather on the opinion of the lawyer.

The old squire never doubted his son for a moment, and in his intercourse with Hester showed her all the tenderness and trust of a loving parent. But he, too, manifestly feared the verdict of a jury. According to him, things in the world around him generally were very bad. What was to be ex-

pected from an ordinary jury such as Cambridgeshire would supply, but prejudice, thick-headed stupidity, or at the best a strict obedience to the dictum of a judge? "It is a case," he said, "in which no jury about here will have sense enough to understand and weigh the facts. There will be on one side the evidence of four people, all swearing the same thing. It may be that one or more of them will break down under cross-examination, and that all will then be straight. But if not, the twelve men in a box will believe them because they are four, not understanding that in such a case four may conspire as easily as two or three. There will be the judge, no doubt; but English judges are always favourable to convictions. The judge begins with the idea that the man before him would hardly have been brought there had he not been guilty."

In all this, and very much more that he said both to Mr Bromley and his son, he was expressing his contempt for the world around him rather than any opinion of his own on this particular matter. "I often think," said he, "that we have to bear more from the stupidity than from the wickedness of the world."

It should be mentioned that about a week after Hester's escape from Chesterton there came to her a letter from her mother.

"DEAREST HESTER,—You do not think that I do not love you because I tried to protect you from what I believe to be sin, and evil, and temptation? You do not think that I am less your mother because I caused you suffering? If your eye offend you, pluck it out. Was I not plucking out my own eye when I caused pain to you? You ought to come back to me and your father. You ought to do so even now. But whether you come back or not, will you not remember that I am the mother who bore you, and have always loved you? And when further distress shall come upon you, will you not return to me?—Your unhappy but most loving mother,

"MARY BOLTON."

In answer to this, Hester, in a long letter, acknowledged her mother's love, and said that the memory of those two days at Chesterton should lessen neither her affection nor her filial duty; but, she went on to say, that, in whatever distress might come upon her, she should turn to her husband for comfort and support, whether he should be with her, or whether he should be away from her. "But," she added, concluding her letter, "beyond my husband and my child, you and papa will always be the dearest to me."

CHAPTER XXXVIII.—BOLLUM.

There was not much to enliven the house at Folking during these days. Caldigate would pass much of his time walking about the place, applying his mind as well as he could to the farm, and holding up his head among the tenants, with whom he was very popular. He had begun his reign over them with hands not only full but free. He

had drained, and roofed, and put up gates, and repaired roads, and shown himself to be an active man, anxious to do good. And now in his trouble they were very true to him. But their sympathy could not ease the burden at his heart. Though by his words and deeds among them he seemed to occupy himself fully, there was a certain

amount of pretence in every effort that he made. He was always affecting a courage in which he felt himself to be deficient. Every smile was false. Every brave word spoken was an attempt at deceit. When alone in his walks,—and he was mostly alone,—his mind would fix itself on his great trouble, and on the crushing sorrow which might only too probably fall upon that loved one whom he had called his wife. Oh, with what regret now did he think of the good advice which the captain had given him on board the *Goldfinder*, and of the sententious, timid wisdom of Mrs Callender! Had she, had Hester, ever uttered to him one word of reproach,—had she ever shuddered in his sight when he had acknowledged that the now odious woman had in that distant land been in his own hearing called by his own name,—it would have been almost better. Her absolute faith added a sting to his sufferings.

Then, as he walked alone about the estate, he would endeavour to think whether there might not yet be some mode of escape,—whether something might not be done to prevent his having to stand in the dock and abide the uncertain verdict of a jury. With Mr Seely he was discontented. Mr Seely seemed to be opposed to any great effort,—would simply trust to the chance of snatching little advantages in the Court. He had money at command. If fifty thousand pounds,—if double that sum,—would have freed him from this trouble, he thought that he could have raised it, and was sure that he would willingly pay it. Twenty thousand pounds two months since, when Crinkett appeared at the christening, would have sent these people away. The same sum, no doubt, would send them away now. But then the arrangement might have been pos-

sible. But now,—how was it now? Could it still be done? Then the whole thing might have been hidden, buried in darkness. Now it was already in the mouths of all men. But still, if these witnesses were made to disappear,—if this woman herself by whom the charge was made would take herself away,—then the trial must be abandoned. There would be a whispering of evil,—or, too probably, the saying of evil without whispering. A terrible injury would have been inflicted upon her and his boy;—but the injury would be less than that which he now feared.

And there was present to him through all this a feeling that the money ought to be paid independently of the accusation brought against him. Had he known at first all that he knew now,—how he had taken their all from these people, and how they had failed absolutely in the last great venture they had made,—he would certainly have shared their loss with them. He would have done all that Crinkett had suggested to him when he and Crinkett were walking along the dike. Crinkett had said that on receiving twenty thousand pounds he would have gone back to Australia, and would have taken a wife with him! That offer had been quite intelligible, and if carried out would have put an end to all trouble. But he had mismanaged that interview. He had been too proud,—too desirous not to seem to buy off a threatening enemy. Now, as the trouble pressed itself more closely upon him,—upon him and his Hester,—he would so willingly buy off his enemy if it were possible! “They ought to have the money,” he said to himself; “if only I could contrive that it should be paid to them.”

One day as he was entering the house by a side door, Darvell the gardener told him that there was a

gentleman waiting to see him. The gentleman was very anxious to see him, and had begged to be allowed to sit down. Darvell, when asked whether the gentleman was a gentleman, expressed an affirmative opinion. He had been driven over from Cambridge in a hired gig, which was now standing in the yard, and was dressed, as Darvell expressed it, "quite accordingly and genteel." So Caldigate passed into the house and found the man seated in the dining-room.

"Perhaps you will step into my study?" said Caldigate. Thus the two men were seated together in the little room which Caldigate used for his own purposes.

Caldigate, as he looked at the man, distrusted his gardener's judgment. The coat and hat and gloves, even the whiskers and head of hair, might have belonged to a gentleman; but not, as he thought, the mouth or the eyes or the hands. And when the man began to speak there was a mixture of assurance and intended complaisance, an affected familiarity and an attempt at ease, which made the master of the house quite sure that his guest was not all that Darvell had represented. The man soon told his story. His name was Bollum, Richard Bollum, and he had connections with Australia;—was largely concerned in Australian gold-mines. When Caldigate heard this, he looked round involuntarily to see whether the door was closed. "We're tiled, of course," said Bollum. Caldigate with a frown nodded his head, and Bollum went on. He hadn't come there, he said, to speak of some recent troubles of which he had heard. He wasn't the man to shove his nose into other people's matters. It was nothing to him who was married to whom. Caldigate shivered, but sat and listened in

silence. But Mr Bollum had had dealings,—many dealings,—with Tom Crinkett. Indeed he was ready to say that Tom Crinkett was his uncle. He was not particularly proud of his uncle, but nevertheless Tom Crinkett was his uncle. Didn't Mr Caldigate think that something ought to be done for Tom Crinkett?

"Yes, I do," said Caldigate, finding himself compelled to say something at the moment, and feeling that he could say so much with positive truth.

Then Bollum continued his story, showing that he knew all the circumstances of Polyeuka. "It was hard on them, wasn't it, Mr Caldigate?"

"I think it was."

"Every rap they had among them, Mr Caldigate! You left them as bare as the palm of my hand!"

"It was not my doing. I simply made him an offer, which every one at the time believed to be liberal."

"Just so. We grants all that. But still you got all their money;—old pals of yours too, as they say out there."

"It is a matter of most intense regret to me. As soon as I knew the circumstances, Mr Bollum, I should have been most happy to have divided the loss with them——"

"That's it,—that's it. That's what'd be right between man and man," said Mr Bollum, interrupting him.

"Had no other subject been introduced?"

"I know nothing about other subjects. I haven't come here to meddle with other subjects. I'm, as it were, a partner of Crinkett's. Any way, I am acting as his agent. I'm quite above board, Mr Caldigate, and in what I say I mean to stick to my own business and not go beyond it. Twenty thousand

pounds is what we ask,—so that we and you may share the loss. You agree to that?"

"I should have agreed to it two months ago," said Caldigate, fearing that he might be caught in a trap,—anxious to do nothing mean, unfair, or contrary to the law,—craving in his heart after the bold, upright conduct of a thoroughly honourable English gentleman, and yet desirous also to use, if it might be used, the instrumentality of this man.

"And why not now? You see," said Bollum, becoming a little more confidential, "how difficult it is for me to speak. Things ain't altered. You've got the money. They've lost the money. There isn't any ill-will, Mr Caldigate. As for Crinkett, he's a rough diamond, of course. What am I to say about the lady?"

"I don't see that you need say anything."

"That's just it. Of course she's one of them; that's all. If there is to be money, she'll have her share. He's an old fool, and perhaps they'll make a match of it." As he said this he winked. "At any rate, they'll be off to Australia together. And what I propose is this, Mr Caldigate——" Then he paused.

"What do you propose?"

"Make the money payable in bills to their joint order at Sydney. They don't want to be wasting any more time here. They'll start at once. This is the 12th April, isn't it? Tuesday the 12th?" Caldigate assented. "The old Goldfinder leaves Plymouth this day week." From this he was sure that Bollum had heard all the story from Euphemia Smith herself, or he would not have talked of the "old" Goldfinder. "Let them have the bills handed to them on board, and they'll go. Let me have the duplicates here. You can remit

the money by July to your agents,—to take up the bills when due. Just let me be with you when the order is given to your banker in London, and everything will be done. It's as easy as kiss."

Caldigate sat silent, turning it over in his own mind, trying to determine what would be best. Here was another opportunity. But it was one as to which he must come to a decision on the spur of the moment. He must deal with the man now or never. The twenty thousand pounds were nothing. Had there been no question about his wife, he would have paid the money, moved by that argument as to his "old pals,"—by the conviction that the result of his dealing with them had in truth been to leave them "as bare as the palm of his hand." They were welcome to the money; and if by giving the money he could save his Hester, how great a thing it would be! Was it not his duty to make the attempt? And yet there was in his bosom a strong aversion to have any secret dealing with such a man as this,—to have any secret dealing in such a matter. To buy off witnesses in order that his wife's name and his boy's legitimacy might be half,—only half,—established! For even though these people should be made absolutely to vanish, though the sea should swallow them, all that had been said would be known, and too probably believed for ever!

And then, too, he was afraid. If he did this thing alone, without counsel, would he not be putting himself into the hands of these wretches? Might he not be almost sure that when they had gotten his money they would turn upon him and demand more? Would not the payment of the money be evidence against him to any jury? Would it be possible to make judge or jury believe, to make even a friend be-

lieve, that in such an emergency he had paid away so large a sum of money because he had felt himself bound to do so by his conscience?

"Well, squire," said Bollum, "I think you see your way through it; don't you?"

"I don't regard the money in the least. They would be welcome to the money."

"That's a great point, anyway."

"But——"

"Ay; but! You're afraid they wouldn't go. You come down to Plymouth, and don't put the bills into their hands or mine till the vessel is under way, with them aboard. Then you and I will step into the boat, and be back ashore. When they know the money's been deposited at a bank in London, they'll trust you as far as that. The Goldfinder won't put back again when she's once off. Won't that make it square?"

"I was thinking of something else."

"Well, yes; there's that trial a-coming on; isn't there?"

"These people have conspired together to tell the basest lie."

"I know nothing about that, Mr Caldigate. I haven't got so much as an opinion. People tell me that all the things look very strong on their side."

"Liars sometimes are successful."

"You can be quit of them,—and pay no more than what you say you kind of owes. I should have thought Crinkett might have asked forty thousand; but Crinkett, though he's rough,—I do own he's rough,—but he's honest after a fashion. Crinkett wants to rob no man; but he feels it hard when he's got the better of. Lies or no lies, can you do better?"

"I should like to see my lawyer first," said Caldigate, almost panting in his anxiety.

"What lawyer? I hate lawyers."

"Mr Seely. My case is in his hands, and I should have to tell him."

"Tell him when you come back from Plymouth, and hold your peace till that's done. No good can come of lawyers in such a matter as this. You might as well tell the town-crier. Why should he want to put bread out of his own mouth? And if there is a chance of hard words being said, why should he hear them? He'll work for his money, no doubt; but what odds is it to him whether your lady is to be called Mrs Caldigate or Miss Bolton? He won't have to go to prison. His boy won't be!—you know what." This was terrible, but yet it was all so true! "I'll tell you what it is, squire. We can't make it lighter by talking about it all round. I used to do a bit of hunting once; and I never knew any good come of asking what there was on the other side of the fence. You've got to have it, or you've got to leave it alone. That's just where you are. Of course it isn't nice."

"I don't mind the money."

"Just so. But it isn't nice for a swell like you to have to hand it over to such a one as Crinkett just as the ship's starting, and then to bolt ashore along with me. The odds are, it is all talked about. Let's own all that. But then it's not nice to have to hear a woman swear that she's your wife, when you've got another,—specially when she's got three men as can swear the same. It ain't nice for you to have me sitting here; I'm well aware of that. There's the choice of evils. You know what that means. I'm a-putting it about as fair as a man can put anything. It's a pity you didn't stump up the money before. But it's not altogether quite too late yet."

"I'll give you an answer to-morrow, Mr Bollum."

"I must be in town to-night."

"I will be with you in London to-morrow if you will give me an address. All that you have said is true; but I cannot do this thing without thinking of it."

"You'll come alone?"

"Yes,—alone."

"As a gentleman?"

"On my word as a gentleman I will come alone."

Then Bollum gave him an address,—not the place at which he resided, but a certain coffee-house in the City, at which he was accustomed to make appointments. "And don't you see any lawyer," said Bollum, shaking his finger. "You can't do any good that way. It stands to reason that no lawyer would let you pay twenty thousand pounds to get out of any scrape. He and you have different legs to stand upon." Then Mr Bollum went away, and was driven back in his gig to the Cambridge Hotel.

As soon as the front door was closed Hester hurried down to her husband, whom she found still in the hall. He took her into his own room, and told her everything that had passed,—everything, as accurately as he could. "And remember," he said, "though I do not owe them money, that I feel bound by my conscience to refund them so much. I should do it, now I know the circumstances, if no charge had been brought against me."

"They have perjured themselves, and have been so wicked."

"Yes, they have been very wicked."

"Let them come and speak the truth, and then let them have the money."

"They will not do that, Hester."

"Prove them to be liars, and then give it to them."

"My own girl, I am thinking of you."

"And I of you. Shall it be said of you that you bought off those who had dared to say that your wife was not your wife? I would not do that. What if the people in the Court should believe what they say?"

"It would be bad for you, then, dearest."

"But I should still be your wife. And baby would still be your own, own honest boy. I am sometimes unhappy, but I am never afraid. Let the devil do his worst, but never speak him fair. I would scorn them till it is all over. Then, if money be due to them, let them have it." As she said this, she had drawn herself a little apart from him,—a little away from the arm which had been round her waist, and was looking him full in the face. Never before, even during the soft happiness of their bridal tour, had she seemed to him to be so handsome.

But her faith, her courage, and her beauty did not alter the circumstances of the case. Because she trusted him, he was not the less afraid of the jury who would have to decide, or of the judge, who, with stern eyes, would probably find himself compelled to tell the jury that the evidence against the prisoner was overwhelming. In choosing what might be best to be done on her account, he could not allow himself to be guided by her spirit. The possibility that the whole gang of them might be made to vanish was present to his mind. Nor could he satisfy himself that in doing as had been proposed to him he would be speaking the devil fair. He would be paying money which he ought to pay, and would perhaps be securing his wife's happiness.

He had promised, at any rate,

that he would see the man in London on the morrow, and that he would see him alone. But he had not promised not to speak on the subject to his attorney. Therefore, after much thought, he wrote to Mr Seely to make an appointment for the next morning, and then told his wife that he would have to go to London on the following day.

"Not to buy those men off?" she said.

"Whatever is done will be done by the advice of my lawyer," he said, peevishly, "You may be sure that I am anxious enough to do the best. When one has to trust to a lawyer, one is bound to trust to him." This seemed to be so true that Hester could say nothing against it.

CHAPTER XXXIX.—RESTITUTION.

He had still the whole night to think about it,—and throughout the whole night he was thinking about it. He had fixed a late hour in the afternoon for his appointment in London, so that he might have an hour or two in Cambridge before he started by the mid-day train. It was during his drive into the town that he at last made up his mind that he would not satisfy himself with discussing the matter with Mr Seely, but that he would endeavour to explain it all to Robert Bolton. No doubt Robert Bolton was now his enemy, as were all the Boltons. But the brother could not but be anxious for his sister's name and his sister's happiness. If a way out of all this misery could be seen, it would be a way out of misery for the Boltons as well as for the Caldigates. If only he could make the attorney believe that Hester was in truth his wife, still, even yet, there might be assistance on that side. But he went to Mr Seely first, the hour of his appointment requiring that it should be so.

But Mr Seely was altogether opposed to any arrangement with Mr Bollum. "No good was ever done," he said, "by buying off witnesses. The thing itself is disreputable, and would to a certainty be known to every one."

"I should not buy them off. I regard the money as their own. I will give Crinkett the money and let him go or stay as he pleases. When giving him the money, I will tell him that he may do as he pleases."

"You would only throw your money away. You would do much worse than throw it away. Their absence would not prevent the trial. The Boltons will take care of that."

"They cannot want to injure their own side, Mr Seely."

"They want to punish you, and to take her away. They will take care that the trial shall go on. And when it was proved, as it would be proved, that you had given these people a large sum of money, and had so secured their absence, do you think that the jury would refuse to believe their sworn depositions, and whatever other evidence would remain? The fact of your having paid them money would secure a verdict against you. The thing would, in my mind, be so disreputable that I should have to throw up the case. I could not defend you."

It was clear to him that Bollum had understood his own side of the question in deprecating any reference to an attorney. The money should have been paid and the four witnesses sent away without a word

to any one,—if any attempt in that direction were made at all. Nevertheless he went to Robert Bolton's office and succeeded in obtaining an interview with his wife's brother. But here, as with the other attorney, he failed to make the man understand the state of his own mind. He had failed in the same way even with his wife. If it were fit that the money should be paid, it could not be right that he should retain it because the people to whom it was due had told lies about him. And if this could be explained to the jury, surely the jury would not give a verdict against him on insufficient evidence, simply because he had done his duty in paying the money!

Robert Bolton listened to him with patience, and without any quick expression of hot anger; though before the interview was over he had used some very cruel words. "We should think ourselves bound to prevent their going, if possible."

"Of course; I have no idea of going down to Plymouth as the man proposed, or of taking any steps to secure their absence."

"Your money is your own, and you can do what you like with it. It certainly is not for me to advise you. If you tell me that you are going to pay it, I can only say that I shall look very sharp after them."

"Why should you want to ruin your sister?"

"You have ruined her; that is our idea. We desire now to rescue her as far as we can from further evil. You have opposed us in every endeavour that we have made. When in the performance of a manifest duty we endeavoured to separate you till after the trial, you succeeded in thwarting us by your influence."

"I left it to her."

"Had you been true and honest

and upright, you would have known that as long as there was a doubt she ought to have been away from you."

"I should have sent her away?"

"Certainly."

"So as to create a doubt in her mind, so as to disturb her peace, so as to make her think that I, having been found out, was willing to be rid of her? It would have killed her."

"Better so than this."

"And yet I am as truly her husband as you are the husband of your wife. If you would only teach yourself to think that possible, then you would feel differently."

"Not as to a temporary separation."

"If you believed me, you would," said Caldigate.

"But I do not believe you. In a matter like this, as you will come to me, I must be plain. I do not believe you. I think that you have betrayed and seduced my sister. Looking at all the evidence and at your own confession, I can come to no other conclusion. I have discussed the matter with my brother, who is a clear, cool-headed, most judicious man, and he is of the same opinion. In our own private court we have brought you in guilty,—guilty of an offence against us all which necessarily makes us as bitter against you as one man can be against another. You have destroyed our sister, and now you come here and ask me my advice as to buying off witnesses!"

"It is all untrue. As there is a God above me I am her loyal, loving husband. I will buy off no witness."

"If I were you I would make no such attempt. It will do no good. I do not think that you have a chance of being acquitted,—not a chance; and then how much worse

it will be for Hester when she finds herself still in your house!"

"She will remain there."

"Even she will feel that to be impossible. Your influence will then probably be removed, and I presume that for a time you will have no home. But we need not discuss that. As you are here, I should not do my duty were I not to assure you that as far as we are concerned,—Hester's family,—nothing shall be spared either in trouble or money to insure the conviction and punishment of the man whom we believe to have brought upon us so terrible a disgrace."

Caldigate, when he got out into the street, felt that he was driven almost to despair. At first he declared to himself, most untruly, that there was no one to believe him,—no, not one. Then he remembered how faithful was his wife; and as he did so, in his misery, he told himself that it might have been better for her had she been less faithful. Looking at it all as he now looked at it, after hearing the words of that hard man, he almost thought that it would have been so. Everybody told him that he would be condemned; and if so, what would be the fate of that poor young mother and her child? It was very well for her to declare, with her arms round his neck, that even should he be dragged away to prison, she would still be his true wife, and that she would wait,—in sorrow indeed and mourning, but still with patience,—till the cruel jailers and the harsh laws had restored him to her. If the law declared him a bigamist, she could not then be his wife. The law must decide,—whether rightly or wrongly, still must decide. And then how could they live together? An evil done must be endured, let it be ever so unendurable. But against fresh evils a man may guard. Was it

not his duty, his manifest, his chief duty, to save her, as far as she could be saved, from further suffering and increased disgrace? Perhaps, after all, Robert Bolton was right when he told him that he ought to have allowed Hester to remain at Chesterton.

Whatever he might do when he got to London, he felt it to be his duty to go up and keep his appointment with Bollum. And he brought with him from home securities and certificates for stock by which he knew that he could raise the sum named at a moment's warning, should he at last decide upon paying the money. When he got into the train, and when he got out of the train, he was still in doubt. Those to whom he had gone for advice had been so hard to him, that he felt himself compelled to put on one side all that they had said. Bollum had suggested, in his graphic manner, that a lawyer and his client stood upon different legs. Caldigate acknowledged to himself that Bollum was right. His own lawyer had been almost as hard to him as his brother-in-law, who was his declared enemy. But what should he do? As to precautions to be taken in reference to the departure of the gang, all that was quite out of the question. They should go to Australia or stay behind, as they pleased. There should be no understanding that they were to go,—or even that they were to hold their tongues because the money was paid to them. It should be fully explained to them that the two things were distinct. Then as he was taken to the inn at which he intended to sleep that night, he made up his mind in the cab that he would pay the money to Crinkett.

He got to London just in time to reach the bank before it was closed, and there made his arrangements. He deposited his documents and

securities, and was assured that the necessary sum should be placed to his credit on the following day. Then he walked across a street or two in the City to the place indicated by Bollum for the appointment. It was at the Jericho Coffee-house, in Levant Court,—a silent, secluded spot, lying between Lombard Street and Cornhill. Here he found himself ten minutes before the time, and, asking for a cup of coffee, sat down at a table fixed to the ground in a little separate box. The order was given to a young woman at a bar in the room. Then an ancient waiter hobbled up to him and explained that coffee was not quite ready. In truth, coffee was not often asked for at the Jericho Coffee-house. The house, said the waiter, was celebrated for its sherry. Would he take half a pint of sherry? So he ordered the sherry, which was afterwards drunk by Bollum.

Bollum came, punctual to the moment, and seated himself at the table with good-humoured alacrity. "Well, Mr Caldigate, how is it to be? I think you must have seen that what I have proposed will be for the best."

"I will tell you what I mean to do, Mr Bollum," said Caldigate, very gravely. "It cannot be said that I owe Mr Crinkett a shilling."

"Certainly not. But it comes very near owing, doesn't it?"

"So near that I mean to pay it."

"That's right."

"So near that I don't like to feel that I have got his money in my pocket. As far as money goes, I have been a fortunate man."

"Wonderful!" said Bollum, enthusiastically.

"And as I was once in partnership with your uncle, I do not like to think that I enriched myself by a bargain which impoverished him."

"It ain't nice, is it,—that you should have it all, and he nothing?"

"Feeling that very strongly," continued Caldigate, merely shaking his head in token of displeasure at Bollum's interruption, "I have determined to repay Mr Crinkett an amount that seems to me to be fair. He shall have back twenty thousand pounds."

"He's a lucky fellow, and he'll be off like a shot,—like a shot."

"He and others have conspired to rob me of all my happiness, thinking that they might so most probably get this money from me. They have invented a wicked lie,—a wicked, damnable lie,—a damnable lie! They are miscreants,—foul miscreants!"

"Come, come, Mr Caldigate."

"Foul miscreants! But they shall have their money, and you shall hear me tell them when I give it to them,—and they must both be here to take it from my hands,—that I do not at all require their absence. There is to be no bargain between us. They are free to remain and swear their false oaths against me. Whether they go or whether they stay will be no affair of mine."

"They'll go, of course, Mr Caldigate."

"Not at my instance. I will take care that that shall be known. They must both come; and into their joint hands will I give the cheque, and they must come prepared with a receipt declaring that they accept the money as restitution of the loss incurred by them in purchasing the Polyeuka mine from me. Do you understand? And I shall bring a witness with me to see them take the money." Bollum, who was considerably depressed by his companion's manner, said that he did understand.

"I suppose I can have a private room here, at noon to-morrow?" asked Caldigate, turning to the woman at the bar.

When that was settled he assured Bollum that a cheque for the amount should be placed in the joint hands of Thomas Crinkett and Euphemia Smith if he, and they with him, would be there at noon on the following day. Bollum in vain attempted to manage the payment without the personal interview, but at last agreed that the man and the woman should be forthcoming.

That night Caldigate dined at his club, one of the University clubs, at which he had been elected just at the time of his marriage. He had seldom been there, but now walked into the dinner-room, resolving that he would not be ashamed to show himself. He fancied that everybody looked at him, and probably there were some present who knew that he was about to stand his trial for bigamy. But he got his dinner, and smoked his cigar; and before the evening was over he had met an old College friend. He was in want of a friend, and explained his wants. He told something of his immediate story, and then asked the man to be present at the scene on the morrow.

"I must have a witness, Gray," said he, "and you will do me a kindness if you will come." Then Mr Gray promised to be present on the occasion.

On the following morning he met Gray at the club, having the cheque ready in his pocket, and together they proceeded to Levant Court. Again he was a little before his time, and the two sat together in the gloomy little room up-stairs. Bollum was the first to come, and when he saw the stranger, was silent,—thinking whether it might not be best to escape and warn Crinkett and the woman that all might not be safe. But the stranger did not look like a detective; and, as he told himself, why should there be danger? So he waited, and

in a few minutes Crinkett entered the room, with the woman veiled.

"Well, Caldigate," said Crinkett, "how is it with you?"

"If you please, Mrs Smith," said Caldigate, "I must ask you to remove your veil,—so that I may be sure that it is you."

She removed her veil very slowly, and then stood looking him in the face,—not full in the face, for she could not quite raise her eyes to meet his. And though she made an effort to brazen it out, she could not quite succeed. She attempted to raise her head, and carry herself with pride; but every now and again there was a slight quiver,—slight, but still visible. The effort, too, was visible. But there she stood, looking at him, and to be looked at,—but without a word. During the whole interview she never once opened her lips.

She had lost all her comeliness. It was now nearly seven years since they two had been on the Gold-finder together, and then he had found her very attractive. There was no attraction now. She was much aged; and her face was coarse, as though she had taken to drinking. But there was still about her something of that look of intellect which had captivated him more, perhaps, than her beauty. Since those days she had become a slave to gold,—and such slavery is hardly compatible with good looks in a woman. There she stood,—ready to listen to him, ready to take his money, but determined not to utter a word.

Then he took the cheque out of his pocket, and holding it in his hand, spoke to them as follows; "I have explained to Mr Bollum, and have explained to my friend here, Mr Gray, the reasons which induce me to pay to you, Thomas Crinkett, and to you, Euphemia Smith, the large sum of twenty

thousand pounds. The nature of our transactions has been such that I feel bound in honour to repay so much of the price you paid for the Polyuka mine."

"All right, Caldigate; all right," said Crinkett.

"And I have explained also to both of them that this payment has nothing whatever to do with the base, false, and most wicked charge which you are bringing against me. It is not because that woman, by a vile perjury, claims me as her husband, and because I wish to buy her silence or his, that I make this restitution. I restore the money of my own free will, without any base bargain. You can go on with your perjury or abstain from it, as you may think best."

"We understand, squire," said Crinkett, affecting to laugh. "You hand over the money,—that's all." Then the woman looked round at her companion, and a frown came across her face; but she said nothing, turning her face again upon Caldigate, and endeavouring to keep her eyes steadfastly fixed upon him.

"Have you brought a receipt

signed by both of you?" Then Bollum handed him a receipt signed "Thomas Crinkett, for self and partners." But Caldigate demanded that the woman also should sign it.

"There is a difficulty about the name, you see," said Bollum. There was a difficulty about the name, certainly. It would not be fair, he thought, that he should force her to the use of a name she disowned, and he did not wish to be hindered from what he was doing by her persistency in calling herself by his own name.

"So be it," said he. "There is the cheque. Mr Gray will see that I put it into both their hands." This he did, each of them stretching out a hand to take it. "And now you can go where you please and act as you please. You have combined to rob me of all that I value most by the basest of lies; but not on that account have I abstained from doing what I believe to be an act of justice." Then he left the room, and paying for the use of it to the woman at the bar, walked off with his friend Gray, leaving Crinkett, Bollum, and the woman still within the house.

CHAPTER XL.—WAITING FOR THE TRIAL.

As he returned to Cambridge Caldigate was not altogether contented with himself. He tried to persuade himself, in reference to the money which he had refunded, that in what he had done he had not at all been actuated by the charge made against him. Had there been no such accusation he would have felt himself bound to share the loss with these people as soon as he had learned the real circumstances. The money had been a burden to him. For the satisfaction of his own honour, of his own feelings, it had become neces-

sary that the money should be refunded. And the need of doing so was not lessened by the fact that a base conspiracy had been made by a gang of villains who had thought that the money might thus be most readily extracted from him. That was his argument with himself, and his defence for what he had done. But nevertheless he was aware that he had been driven to do it now,—to pay the money at this special moment,—by an undercurrent of hope that these enemies would think it best for themselves to go as soon as they had his money in their hands.

He wished to be honest, he wished to be honourable, he wished that all that he did could be what the world calls "above board;" but still it was so essential for him and for his wife that they should go! He had been very steady in assuring these wretched ones that they might go or stay, as they pleased. He had been careful that there should be a credible witness of his assurance. He might succeed in making others believe that he had not attempted to purchase their absence; but he could not make himself believe it.

Even though a jury should not convict him, there was so much in his Australian life which would not bear the searching light of cross-examination! The same may probably be said of most of us. In such trials as this that he was anticipating, there is often a special cruelty in the exposure of matters which are for the most part happily kept in the background. A man on some occasion inadvertently takes a little more wine than is good for him. It is an accident most uncommon with him, and nobody thinks much about it. But chance brings the case to the notice of the police courts, and the poor victim is published to the world as a drunkard in the columns of all the newspapers. Some young girl fancies herself in love, and the man is unworthy. The feeling passes away, and none but herself, and perhaps her mother, are the wiser. But if by some chance, some treachery, a letter should get printed and read, the poor girl's punishment is so severe that she is driven to wish herself in the grave.

He had been foolish, very foolish, as we have seen, on board the Goldfinder,—and wicked too. There could be no doubt about that. When it would all come out in this dreaded trial he would be quite unable to defend himself. There was enough to enable Mrs

Bolton to point at him with a finger of scorn as a degraded sinner. And yet,—yet there had been nothing which he had not dared to own to his wife in the secrecy of their mutual confidence, and which, in secret, she had not been able to condone without a moment's hesitation. He had been in love with the woman,—in love after a fashion. He had promised to marry her. He had done worse than that. And then, when he had found that the passion for gold was strong upon her, he had bought his freedom from her. The story would be very bad as told in Court, and yet he had told it all to his wife! She had admitted his excuse when he had spoken of the savageness of his life, of the craving which a man would feel for some feminine society, of her undoubted cleverness, and then of her avarice. And then when he swore that through it all he had still loved her,—her, Hester Bolton,—whom he had but once seen, but whom, having seen, he had never allowed to pass out of his mind, she still believed him, and thought that the holiness of that love had purified him. She believed him;—but who else would believe him? Of course he was most anxious that those people should go.

Before he left London he wrote both to Mr Seely and to Robert Bolton, saying what he had done. The letter to his own attorney was long and full. He gave an account in detail of the whole matter, declaring that he would not allow himself to be hindered from paying a debt which he believed to be due, by the wickedness of those to whom it was owing. "The two things have nothing to do with each other," he said; "and if you choose to throw up my defence, of course you can do so. I cannot allow myself to be debarred from exercising my own judgment in another matter, because you think that what

I decide upon doing may not tally with your views as to my defence." To Robert Bolton he was much shorter. "I think you ought to know what I have done," he said; "at any rate, I do not choose that you should be left in ignorance." Mr Seely took no notice of the communication, not feeling himself bound to carry out his threat by withdrawing his assistance from his client. But Robert and William Bolton agreed to have Crinkett's movements watched by a detective policeman. They were both determined that if possible Crinkett and the woman should be kept in the country.

In these days the old squire made many changes in his residence, vacillating between his house in Cambridge and the house at Folking. His books were at Cambridge, and he could not have them brought back; and yet he felt that he ought to evince his constancy to his son, his conviction of his son's innocence, by remaining at Folking. And he was aware, too, that his presence there was a comfort both to his son and Hester. When John Caldigate had gone up to London, his father had been in Cambridge, but on his return he found the old squire at his old house. "Yes," he said, telling the story of what he had just done, "I have paid twenty thousand pounds out of hand to those rascals, simply because I thought I owed it to them!" The squire shook his head, not being able to approve of the act. "I don't see why I should have allowed myself to be hindered from doing what I thought to be right, because they were doing what they knew to be wrong."

"They won't go, you know."

"I daresay not, sir. Why should they?"

"But the jury will believe that you intended to purchase their absence."

"I think I have made all that clear."

"I am afraid not, John. The man applied to you for the money, and was refused. That was the beginning of it. Then the application was repeated by the woman with a threat; and you again refused. Then they present themselves to the magistrates, and make the accusation; and, upon that, you pay the money. Of course it will come out at the trial that you paid it immediately after this renewed application from Bollum. It would have been better to have defied them."

"I did defy them," said John Caldigate. But all that his father said seemed to him to be true, so that he repented himself of what he had done.

He made no inquiry on the subject, but, early in May he heard from Mr Seely that Crinkett and the woman were still in London, and that they had abandoned the idea of going at once to Australia. According to Mr Seely's story,—of the truth of which he declared himself to be by no means certain,—Crinkett had wished to go, but had been retained by the woman. "As far as I can learn," said Mr Seely, "she is in communication with the Boltons, who will of course keep her if it be possible. He would get off if he could; but she, I take it, has got hold of the money. When you made the cheque payable to her order, you effectually provided for their remaining here. If he could have got the money without her name, he would have gone, and she would have gone with him."

"But that was not my object," said Caldigate, angrily. Mr Seely thereupon shrugged his shoulders.

Early in June the man came back who had been sent out to Sydney in February on behalf of Caldigate. He also had been commissioned to seek for evidence, and

to bring back with him, almost at any cost, whatever witness or witnesses he might find whose presence in England would serve Caldigate's cause. But he brought no one, and had learned very little. He too had been at Ahalala and at Nobble. At Nobble the people were now very full of the subject, and were very much divided in opinion. There were Crinketters and anti-Crinketters, Caldigatites and anti-Caldigatites. A certain number of persons were ready to swear that there had been a marriage, and an equal number, perhaps, to swear that there had been none. But no new fact had been brought to light. Dick Shand had not been found,—who had been living with Caldigate when the marriage was supposed to have been solemnised. Nor had that register been discovered from which the copy of the certificate was supposed to have been taken. All through the colony,—so said this agent,—a very great interest was felt in the matter. The newspapers from day to day contained paragraphs about it. But nobody had appeared whom it was worth while to bring home. Mrs Heniker, of the hotel at Nobble, had offered to swear that there had been no marriage. This offer she made and repeated when she had come to understand accurately on whose behalf this last agent had come to the colony. But then, before she had understood this, she had offered to swear the reverse; and it became known that she was very anxious to be carried back to the old country free of expense. No credible witness could be found who had heard Caldigate call the woman Mrs Smith after the date assigned to the marriage. She no doubt had used various names, had called herself sometimes Mrs Caldigate, sometimes Mrs Smith, but generally, in such documents as she had to sign in reference to her

mining shares, Euphemia Cettini. It was by that name that she had been known in Sydney when performing on the stage; and it was now alleged on her behalf that she had bought and sold shares in that name under the idea that she would thus best secure to herself their separate and undisturbed possession. Proof was brought home that Caldigate himself had made over to her shares in that name; but Mr Seely did not depend much on this as proof against the marriage.

Mr Seely seemed to depend very little on anything,—so little that Caldigate almost wished that he had carried out his threat and thrown up the case. “Does he not believe you when you tell him?” his wife asked. Caldigate was forced to confess that apparently the lawyer did not believe him. In fact, Mr Seely had even said as much. “In such cases a lawyer should never believe or disbelieve; or, if he does, he should never speak of his belief. It is with your acquittal or conviction that I am concerned, in which matter I can better assist you by cool judgment than by any fervid assurance.” All this made Caldigate not only angry but unhappy, for he could not fail to perceive that the public around him were in the same mind as Mr Seely. In his own parish they believed him, but apparently not beyond his parish. It might be possible that he should escape,—that seemed to be the general opinion; but then general opinion went on to declare that there was no reason for supposing that he had not married the woman merely because he said that he had not done so.

Then gradually there fell upon poor Hester's mind a doubt,—and, after that, almost a conviction. Not a doubt as to her husband's truth! No suspicion on that score ever troubled her for a moment. But there came upon her a fear,

almost more than a fear, that these terrible enemies would be strong enough to override the truth, and to carry with them both a judge and a jury. As the summer months ran on, they all became aware that for any purpose of removing the witnesses the money had been paid in vain. Crinkett was living in all opulence at a hotel at Brighton; and the woman, calling herself Mrs Caldigate, had taken furnished apartments in London. Rumour came that she was frequently seen at the theatres, and that she had appeared more than once in an open carriage in the parks. There was no doubt but that Caldigate's money had made them very comfortable for the present. The whole story of the money had been made public, and of course there were various opinions about it. The prevailing idea was, that an attempt had been made to buy off the first wife, but that the first wife had been clever enough to get the money without having to go. Caldigate was thought to have been very foolish; on which subject Bollum once expressed himself strongly to a friend. "Clever!" he said; "Caldigate clever! The greatest idiot I ever came across in my life! I'd made it quite straight for him,—so that there couldn't have been a wrinkle. But he wouldn't have it. There are men so soft that one can't understand 'em." To do Bollum justice it should be said that he was most anxious to induce his uncle and the woman to leave the country when they had got the money.

Though very miserable, Hester was very brave. In the presence of her husband she would never allow herself to seem to doubt. She would speak of their marriage as a thing so holy that nothing within the power of man could disturb it. Of course they were man and wife, and of course the truth would at

last prevail. Was not the Lord able, in His own good time, to set all these matters right? And in discussing the matter with him she would always seem to imply that the Lord's good time would be the time of the trial. She would never herself hint to him that there might be a period of separation coming. Though in secrecy she was preparing for what might befall him, turning over in her woman's mind how she might best relieve the agony of his jail, she let no sign escape her that she looked forward to such misery. She let no such sign escape her in her intercourse with him. But with his father she could speak more freely. It had, indeed, come to be understood between her and the old squire, that it would be best that they should discuss the matter openly. Arrangements must be made for their future life, so that when the blow came they might not be unprepared. Hester declared that nothing but positive want of shelter should induce her to go back to Chesterton. "They think him to be all that's bad," she said. "I know him to be all that's good. How is it possible that we should live together?" The old man had, of course, turned it over much in his mind. If it could be true that that woman had in truth become his son's wife, and that this dear, sweet, young mother had been deceived, betrayed, and cheated out of her very existence, then that house at Folking could be no proper home for her. Her grave would be best; but till that might be reached, any home would be better than Folking. But he was almost sure that it was not so; and her confidence,—old as he was, and prone to be suspicious,—made him confident.

When the moment came he could not doubt how he would answer her. He could not crush her spirit by seeming for a moment to have

a suspicion. "Your home, of course, shall be here," he said. "It shall be your own house."

"And you?"

"It shall be my house too. If it should come to that, we will be, at any rate, together. You shall not be left without a friend."

"It is not for myself," she said, "but for his boy and for him;—what will be best for them. I would take a cabin at the prison-gate, so as to be nearest to him,—if it were only myself." And so it was settled between them, that should that great misery fall upon them, she would remain at Folking and he would remain with her. Nothing that judge or jury could do would deprive her of the right to occupy her husband's house.

In this way the months of May and June and the first fortnight of July wore themselves away, and then the time for the trial had come. Up to the last it had been hoped that tidings might be heard either by letter or telegram from Dick Shand; but it seemed that he had vanished from the face of the earth. No suggestion of news as to his whereabouts was received on which it might have been possible to found an argument for the further postponement of the trial. Mr Seely had been anxious for such postponement,—perhaps thinking that as the hotel at Brighton and the carriages in the park were expensive, Crinkett and the lady might take their departure for Australia without saying a word to the lawyer who had undertaken the prosecution. But there was no adequate ground for delay, and on Tuesday the 17th July the trial was to be commenced. On the previous day Caldigate, at his own request, was introduced to Sir John Joram, who had been brought down special to Cambridge for his defence. Mr Seely had advised him not to see the

barrister who was to defend him, leaving it, however, quite at his option to do so or not as he pleased.

"Sir John will see you, but I think he had rather not," said Mr Seely. But Caldigate had chosen to have the interview. "I have thought it best to say just one word to you," said Caldigate.

"I am quite at your service," said Sir John.

"I want you to hear from my own lips that a falser charge than this was never made against a man."

"I am glad to hear it," said Sir John,—and then he paused. "That is to say, Mr Caldigate, I am bound in courtesy to you to make some such civil reply as I should have made had I not been employed in your case, and had circumstances then induced you to make such a statement to me. But in truth, as I am so employed, no statement from your lips ought to affect me in the least. For your own sake I will say that no statement will affect me. It is not for me to believe or disbelieve anything in this matter. If, carried away by my feelings, I were to appeal to the jury for their sympathy because of my belief, I should betray your cause. It will be my duty not to make the jury believe you, who, in your position, will not be expected even to tell the truth; but to induce them, if possible, to disbelieve the witnesses against you who will be on their oath. Second-hand protestations from an advocate are never of much avail, and in many cases have been prejudicial. I can only assure you that I understand the importance of the interests confided to me, and that I will endeavour to be true to my trust."

Caldigate, who wanted sympathy, who wanted an assurance of confidence in his word, was by no means contented with his counsel-lor; but he was too wise at the present moment to quarrel with him.

THE HAVEN OF CARMEL.

THE shore-line which bounds the Mediterranean on the south-east is one of the straightest in the world. The current of the Nile brings with it the soil of Upper Egypt, and spreads it along the coast of Palestine almost as far north as Jaffa. The traveller who approaches the Holy Land from Egypt sees before him an inhospitable beach strewn with wrecks and backed by glaring yellow sand-dunes. For two hundred miles from Port Said this harbourless coast stretches northwards to the promontory of Carmel. Gaza, Ascalon, Joppa, and Cæsarea have no natural harbours; and the small ports once formed at these cities, behind the dangerous reefs, are now, with the exception of Joppa, choked by sand, and entirely unused.

But on reaching the Carmel promontory, crowned by its lighthouse and its white fortress-monastery, a new scene opens before the eye. A bay, three miles deep and eight miles across, runs in with a regular sweep. At the south end is the small walled town of Haifa, the ancient Hepha or "haven" of Jewish times. On the north, the famous town of Acre—the last Christian stronghold in Palestine—rises from the water, girt with the walls which were first built by Crusaders, and afterwards repaired by the famous Syrian chief, Dháhr el Amr.

The scenery of this bay is perhaps the most charming to be found in Palestine.

On the south is Carmel—a long dark ridge, clothed with dense copses, in which the fallow-deer, the roebuck, and the gazelle are found; while at its north-west or sea extremity the monastery stands,

surrounded with rich vineyards, attesting the fertility of the red mountain-soil. The ridge is narrow, and the northern slopes very steep; while to the south a maze of deep precipitous valleys, full of clear springs, divides the block of hill into an intricate system of spurs and rounded tops. The long hog's-back whence these run out rises to about 1700 feet above the sea, and forms a protection for the bay in the time of the winter gales, which beat from the south-west. The promontory and reefs which run out below the mountain, also break the force of the sea; and thus the Haven of Carmel is the only place in Palestine where the mail-boats can touch in all weathers during the winter.

On the narrow plain between Carmel and the shore stands Haifa, a town of 4000 inhabitants squeezed in between four brown walls a century old, and presenting the usual picturesque and half-ruinous appearance of Levantine towns. Above it stands an old square tower, in whose walls the shot and shell of the English guns of 1840 are still sticking. Between Haifa and the promontory is the neat village of the German colony, and beyond this the ruins of *Haifa 'Atika*, and the ancient rock-cut cemetery of Jewish tombs.

About a mile north-east of Haifa, the Kishon enters the sea, flowing down under the brow of Carmel from the broad inland plain of Esdraelon. Rows of tall date-palms, standing on the sand-dunes which have gradually forced the stream northwards, surround the lagoons at its mouth.

Following the line of the bay, we arrive next at the Belus river, which runs into the sea just south of Acre,

and which repeats the scenery of the Kishon mouth. The name of the Belus is scarcely less familiar to us than that of the southern stream, as being the famous scene of the discovery of glass; and the white sand, which was thought by the ancient sailors to have such peculiar properties, is still heaped up on either bank, where the rapid current runs down to the sea with a perennial supply of clear water.

The view northwards from Haifa is striking. The long line of the Galilean mountains rises gradually from the Ladder of Tyre to the crags of Jebel Jermûk, and behind these appears the snowy dome of Hermon, eighty miles away. In the evening, about sunset, the colouring of this view is marvellous. The mountains are suffused with a flush, at first of mellow amber colour, but gradually deepening to a rich rosy red. Long blue shadows slowly creep up the slopes, and the tall minaret at Acre stands out white against them. The brilliant hues fade rapidly, a dull leaden colour spreads over the hills and over the smooth waters of the bay, while only the top of Hermon, 9000 feet above the sea, still reflects the sun's rays for a few minutes longer.

The roadstead of Carmel is capable of being easily made into a good harbour. A breakwater might run out from the promontory, formed of the stone of the mountain, already quarried by the Germans; while the line of beach is sufficiently wide to admit of quays and buildings extending along it. At Acre are remains of the old medieval port, and of the tower *el Menârah* ("the lighthouse") on its rock at the entrance; but the small port has been filled up with sand and stones, and even if reopened would be exposed to the full force of the storms blowing on shore, unbroken as at Haifa by the mountain-ridge.

Napoleon called Acre "the key of Syria;" but the dictum applies still better to Haifa. Not only does it possess a sheltered harbour, but it forms a natural landing-place, whence main roads lead in every direction. The maritime plain extending from Carmel to the Ladder of Tyre, communicates by three passes with the inland plateaux of Esdraelon and the Buttauf. The main routes to Shechem, to the corn-plains of the Haurân, to Damascus, to Upper Galilee, and along the coast north or south, all radiate from Haifa. The town is already gaining in importance, while Acre remains ruinous; and should civilisation ever reach the shores of Palestine, the Carmel Haven would immediately become a port of consequence.

Haifa is one of the harbours which has a claim to consideration as the starting-point of the Euphrates Valley Railway. This idea was first proposed in 1873, and has of late been warmly advocated. In its favour it may be said that south of the bay of Iskanderûn there is no point where the inland watershed can be more easily crossed. A harbour exists at Beirût, but the steep ridge of Lebanon rises behind it. Tyre has been proposed as the starting-point, but possesses no very observable advantages, as the small and very exposed harbour is filled up with sand, and as the country behind is rugged and mountainous. From Haifa only can the Palestine watershed be easily crossed, as the greatest elevation in the plain of Esdraelon would be only 250 feet above the sea.

There are, however, many difficulties connected with this route which probably will prevent its competing with that from Iskanderûn. It is true that nearly 200 miles might be saved by a direct line from Carmel by Bozrah and Baghdad to Bassorah on Euphrates,

as compared with that by Antioch, Aleppo, and Birehjik; but the levels are in favour of the longer route. The deep valley of the Jordan would have to be crossed by the southern line, and a fall of 1100 feet would occur in less than 25 miles. After crossing the river, the line of the *Yermák* or Hieromax would be followed—a narrow valley between walls of white rock—and in about 30 miles the ascent would be not less than 2000 feet. The highest point reached by the northern route is only about 1900 feet above the sea; and the ascent is gradual, no deep gorge like that of Jordan intervening.

A second objection of greater force may also be urged against the Carmel line. It must of necessity cross some part of the waterless and unknown wilds called *Bedi-yet-esh-Shâm*, “the waste of Damascus.”

From Jordan to Euphrates this wilderness is inhabited by almost independent Arab tribes—the fierce *Sugr* or “hawk” Arabs, and the great nation of the *'Anazeh* or “goat-keepers.”

These nomads are able, indeed, to support large droves of camels, cattle, and even horses, on the water found in the desert; but they are at times driven to the boundary rivers by thirst, and would certainly resist any attempt to invade their country and to drink up their water. The line would be rendered costly by the great difficulty of obtaining supplies, and by the constant hostility of the lawless tribes.

As a starting-point for other lines the Carmel port would, however, prove most valuable. Damascus, Homs, Hamah, and Aleppo might thus be connected with the coast, and a line to Jerusalem through Nâblus would be far more easily made than the proposed railway from Jaffa, which could only

at great expense be carried up the hill-rampart which rises west of the Holy City. The accessibility of Shechem (or Nâblus) is a matter of special importance; for that city—the first gathering-place of Israel—will prove in all probability the true capital of Palestine. Situate in cool healthy mountains, in the centre of the land, close to the most fertile plains and the finest olive-gardens and vineyards—supplied with water from a score of beautiful springs—Shechem possesses advantages with which the little mountain-town of Jerusalem could not hope to compete.

The position of Haifa possesses military not less than industrial advantages, and the town may for this reason alone become some day famous. No military man can look at the map without seeing in the little district (scarcely larger than Cyprus) which comprises the full extent of the Holy Land from Dan to Beersheba, a natural bulwark defending the Suez Canal against attack from any point in Asia Minor. In Palestine a second Torres Vedras might be established—a base of operations in a position in immediate communication with the sea, and which must be attacked in front, as it could neither be out-flanked nor masked.

The deep trench of the Jordan valley can only be easily crossed just south of the Sea of Galilee; and thence by the valley of Jezreel, the plain of Esdraelon, and the smaller plain of Dothan, lies the highway from Aleppo and Damascus to Egypt. It is the same highway by which Thothmes advanced before the Exodus, and Necho when he met Josiah at Megiddo. Strange as it may appear, the battle of Armageddon is a military probability, because the strategical lines of advance are not changed by modern tactical improvements, and the

old battle-fields of Palestine might again form the theatre of civilised contests.

The rugged chain of Lebanon, the Eastern desert, the difficult Judean hills, bound the line of advance, and confine it to the immediate neighbourhood of Carmel and the bay of Acre.

It is a curious and perhaps not unimportant consideration, that the military and commercial centres of Palestine most interesting to England are thus remote from the religious centres—the Holy Places—with which France is specially concerned. Jerusalem and Bethlehem lie far south of the most fertile and open part of the country. Nazareth stands in its chalk-hills north of the great plain of Esdraelon. Thus there is room for the practical and sentimental side by side, and the holy cities need never be deformed by modern fortifications or by railway termini.

It is well known to those who have visited the Levant that Palestine is a special centre of Russian intrigue. An ugly fortress built in 1860 dominates Jerusalem, and includes the Russian cathedral, the hospice, consulate, mission-house, and buildings capable of containing 1000 pilgrims. Pilgrimages are not only encouraged, but even subsidised by the Russian Government; Russian intrigue forms the talk of the country; and the belief is common in Palestine that Jerusalem is coveted by the Czar as a centre of the Greek faith which should rival Rome itself.

The possibility of a Russian advance on India was some little time ago considered chimerical, yet recent events have gone far to justify this opinion. The possibility of a Russian advance on, and occupation of Palestine, is not by any means less.

From Tiflis to Erzerûm the Rus-

sian army advanced a distance of 250 miles. From Erzerûm to Damascus is only a distance of 500, and from Batûm to Port Said the total distance is about 950 miles. The distance from Khiva to the Indian frontier is 800 miles, and from the Caspian to Khiva about 600. Thus the total distance from the starting-point is half as long again in the case of India, while the country is even more difficult than that which would be traversed in an advance on Damascus.

If, then, the true aim of Russia is to be sought in Asia Minor, and if it should prove that she is seeking in Syria that Mediterranean port and that religious capital which have been denied her in Europe, it will not be by the acquisition of Cyprus that our interests will be guarded, nor by a lengthy advance from Aleppo that the Russian invasion would best be encountered. A long advance through a difficult country, without roads, and but thinly populated, would prove disadvantageous to a Power whose military resources are not unlimited; and an English force might be held in check while, with characteristic boldness, the Russian generals continued their advance.

In such a possible case the position which would be best and most securely held would be near the port of Haifa—a position which could not be masked or outflanked, dominating the old highroad to the plain of Sharon.

There is another feature in the possible future of Palestine which is worthy of consideration—namely, the Jewish immigration, which may be said already to have commenced. Hitherto the insecurity of the country and the obstructiveness of Turkish officials have deterred Jewish capitalists from employing their money in the land; but the Jewish population of the poorer class has

for several years been increasing in Jerusalem at the rate of over a thousand souls per annum.

The number of Jews in the Holy City is now probably not far short of 10,000, or nearly half the total of inhabitants.

Many reasons have been suggested for this influx of Jews into Palestine. The terror of the conscription has driven away a number of Polish and Russian Jews from those countries, and the *Hallukah* or alms distributed to the poor in Jerusalem has also proved an attraction to many. Religious attachment to the Holy City has also been in many cases the reason of the return of the poorer and more pious, and no one can visit the Wailing-place on a Friday without being impressed with the reality of Jewish devotion, and the vitality of their belief in the future, and of their sorrow for the past and present.

It would appear, also, that an interest in Palestine is gradually growing up among the more influential class of European Jews; and among the wonderful changes which are so rapidly developing in the East, we may perhaps be destined to witness an extensive movement in Palestine, by which the Jews would become the owners of the country and the chief employers of native labour.

In such a case the town of Haifa would certainly rise to a position of importance as the only good port within the limits of the Holy Land. From the Christian era downwards, it has been a favourite abode of the Jews. In the twelfth century it is specially noted as having a large Jewish population; and at the present time, its trade, which is growing steadily, is principally in the hands of the Jewish inhabitants, who number 1000 souls, or about a quarter of the population.

Christian information with regard to the Jews is, as a rule, so imperfect, that it is not easy to estimate the influence of such organisation as is represented by the "Universal Israelite Alliance;" but it is indisputable that the Jews have taken and are taking measures to promote industrial education and the employment of Jewish capital in Palestine, and it can scarcely be doubted that they are well fitted by character and by linguistic attainments to deal with the native population of Syria.

The subject of colonisation in Palestine excites much interest in certain classes of English society. Colonies have already been started in the country, and a society has been formed for the promotion of agriculture in the land.

The Germans who live at Haifa and Jaffa are, however, the only colonists who have practically succeeded in establishing themselves in the country. Impelled by a mystic sense of the importance of giving to the world the example of a community living on the model of the apostolic society—building a "spiritual temple" of faith and good works in the very country where the actual Temple once stood, and raising a sacrifice of prayer where the ancient sacrifices were offered—these humble settlers have gathered from Germany, England, and America, and have established a society which in some respects resembles the well-known American sects, Bible Communists, &c., but which is not distinguished from the rest of the world by any peculiar ideas on domestic matters.

From the sandy beach west of the walls of Haifa, a broad road runs up to the stony foot of Carmel. On either side are gardens shaded by young acacias, which grow yearly more luxuriant. Behind these stand the little villas,

each in its own plot of ground, built tastefully and strongly of the brown shelly limestone from the mountain, with piers and arches of snow-white chalk. The orderly and cleanly appearance of this little model village of eighty-five houses offers a startling contrast to the ill-built, ruinous, mud-roofed cabins of the Fellahîn, and the gloomy and dirty mansions of the townsmen. The honest faces of the colonists, the brown straw-hats and short skirts of the women, the wheeled vehicles and agricultural instruments, which meet the eye of a visitor to the colony, are sights which seem strangely incongruous with the palm-groves on the white sand-hills and the Eastern vegetation which clothes the steep slopes of Carmel, the minarets of the Haifa mosques, and the old rock-sepulchres of the Jews.

Yet in spite of industry and energy, the German colonists cannot be said to be prosperous. Want of capital, want of a leader, and want of influence with the Government of the country—internal dissensions, and feuds with the natives—are difficulties which threaten the existence of the community; but beyond these there is a fundamental source of weakness which is incurable—namely, the impossibility of competing with the native population in agricultural employments. The German cannot endure the sun like the Fellah; the German habits of life make it impossible for him to live on wages which would seem fabulous riches in the eyes of the native peasant. Thus the idea that a whole nation can be exterminated and replaced by Germans is one which will scarcely recommend itself to any but the "Temple Society" enthusiasts.

It will be evident to any who consider the question of developing the resources of Palestine in a prac-

tical manner, that the employment of the native population is far more likely to be practicable than their extermination or expatriation. The labour of the peasantry, who are seasoned to the climate, who live with a frugality equal to that of the Hindoo, and who are possessed of powers of endurance and of natural energy and abilities of no mean order, has a value not to be disregarded.

The Syrian Fellahîn are indeed a race peculiarly interesting, not only to those interested in the future of Palestine, but also to those who study its past history. In the Fellah we see the modern representative of that ancient population which owned the country before the Jewish invasion under Joshua, and which was never exterminated even by the fierce persecution succeeding that conquest. Their religion is the old religion of the "high places," against which the Mishnah in the second century of our era inveighs not less strongly than the Pentateuch itself, and which had its shrines at Gaza and at Ascalon as late as the fourth century. Their language is the Aramaic tongue, which was spoken by the "ignorant" in the time of Christ, and which Jerome still called the language of the country. Their customs recall the graphic episodes of the Books of Samuel; their methods of agriculture are those which are incidentally described in the law of Moses.

There is perhaps no nation more cruelly oppressed in the Turkish dominions than are the peasantry of Syria. The taxes are assessed without any reference to the character of the harvest; and the corn is not allowed to be reaped until that assessment has been made. To this crying injustice is added the violence and greediness of the irregular *gendarmérie* em-

ployed in levying the taxes; while the injustice of venal magistrates and the cruel severity of the conscription seem sufficient, when added to the exactions of the money-lenders, to reduce the whole population to ruin and despair.

To those acquainted with the Levant, it is interesting and encouraging to observe how well the English scheme of reform probes the worst defects of Turkish government. The appointment of honest and influential Englishmen to regulate the collection of the taxes, to watch the administration of justice, and to rule the wild corps of irregular police, would perhaps be sufficient, without any more fundamental changes, to restore, in time, prosperity and happiness to the Syrians. Men of tact and determination, acquainted with the customs and prejudices of the country, and with the spirit in which Moslems regard civil law as founded on religious faith, must be selected. They must be given power more than nominal, to secure their influence being practically felt; and, above all, they must be English by birth, and not merely in name—for to no half-bred Maltese or Levantine British subject will either the governor or the governed accord that respect which our fellow-countrymen in the East encounter invariably. It is sincerely to be hoped that the reforms signed by the Sultan are intended, on the part of Turkey, to prove of such practical importance.

The fact that Midhat Pasha has been appointed to rule Syria for five years is sufficient evidence that there, at least, a genuine effort to reform will be made. The energy and ability of this enlightened statesman are now more generally known and appreciated than in 1873, when for a short time he held the same position, and left behind

him a reputation for probity and administrative capacity which endeared him to the inhabitants of Syria, who now welcome him back. So long as Midhat rules Palestine, a marked and progressive improvement of the land may be expected.

We cannot doubt that English administration will be regarded in Palestine with unmixed feelings of delight by all save the cruel and rapacious tyrants who have lived on the misery of the native peasantry.

It is true that Moslems regard the native Christians, and all those of the Greek Church with whom they come in contact, with feelings of hatred and contempt. Nor can we wonder at this if we take into account the miserable character of the native Christians and the vices of the Greek clergy. It is not, however, in this light that they regard the English *Brudesdânt*. They know that millions of their co-religionists are happy under English rule—that the *Melika Inglîz* is a great Mohammedan sovereign; and they find a toleration and catholicity of religious opinion among the English with whom they are acquainted which they contrast with the narrow fanaticism of Eastern Christians.

The poor peasants of Syria used to ask English travellers constantly, "When will you come to build up our country?" They have a saying that "England is the Sultan's sword;" and they would rejoice to hear that while the Sultan remains the "Head of the Faith," in which capacity he is firmly established in their affections, yet that the same arm which, in their estimation, wields the Sultan's sword, is also to be employed in holding the sword of justice in his dominions, and that the reign of mongrel foreign rulers, who have so long ground the faces of the poor, is over.

There is no people who, from habit and character, are so likely to be successful in governing the Levantine Moslems as are the English.

It may, however, be asked, Is Palestine a country which would repay any serious attempt to develop its resources? The land is regarded as barren and desolate—a ridge of stony mountain flanked by malarious plains and a sandy coast. Yet such an estimate of its value is quite untrue. The country is naturally as fertile as ever, and is merely depopulated and uncultivated because ill ruled, or rather not governed at all. The rich harvests—which are raised without manure on ground only scratched with the plough, by a population only about one-tenth of that which even now might be supported by the country—attest the fruitfulness of the soil; and the prosperity of the villages and farms owned by foreigners who employ the native peasantry, is a sign of the change which might speedily be wrought by good government, and by the use of very moderate capital.

Palestine possesses one great advantage in the accessibility of its geographical position. Not only could an English army in Palestine base itself on the sea, and yet defend the breadth of the land by a single day's march, but the same advantage would render the rich corn-plateau of the Haurân a valuable source for the supply of Europe. The soil of the Haurân, and of the great plains of Lower Galilee, consists of a rich, friable, basaltic *débris*, in which every production of the country flourishes. The soil of Sharon is scarcely less productive; and the stony hills are still fitted for that luxuriant vine-culture which must at one time have

covered the slopes with rich foliage, such as still lights up the rugged cliffs of Hermon, and which has left its marks in the old wine-presses, hewn in rock, which occur all over the hills of Palestine.

The oil of Galilee is still almost as famous as in the days when the Talmudic scholars sang its praises; and there is probably no article of production found in Southern Italy which might not be grown in Palestine. The sugar-cane was once extensively cultivated by the Crusaders in the Jordan valley, and the indigo-plant still grows wild in the plains.

The construction of some fifty miles of road in the plain of Sharon, and the re-establishment of its old system of irrigation and drainage; the extension of a railway from Haifa to Damascus, through the rich agricultural districts of Central Palestine and of the Haurân; the acquisition of land by Jews or Europeans, employing the natives of the country as farm-labourers;—these changes, which seem now far less improbable than they did only a year ago, would render Palestine a valuable and accessible agricultural district, and the wealth now neglected would flow to the coast at the old "Haven" of Carmel, which might thus become one of the most thriving ports in the Levant, the commercial gateway to Syria, and the military base from which most effectively the Suez Canal might be defended.

Events in the East hasten onward so rapidly that the future thus suggested may perhaps become, at no distant time, an accomplished fact; for it can hardly be denied that many events apparently far more improbable have actually occurred during the course of the past year.

A MEDIUM OF LAST CENTURY.—PART I.

ONE evening last spring my friend Clifton and I found ourselves at his fireside enjoying a bottle of West India Madeira. We had had a pouring wet day with the hounds, no kill, and *such* a ride home! So, there being nothing in the day's adventures to think or talk over with pleasure, we had both been out of sorts since half-past five o'clock, had come in to dinner in anything but high spirits, and had conversed chiefly in monosyllables during the repast. But the nice cosy dinner, and the good wine (Clifton's wines are undeniable), had operated powerfully during three quarters of an hour, to bring us into something of a genial humour; and by the time the butler had retreated, and we were comfortably arranged flanking the fire, our spirits were raised a little, and our tongues loosed. The rainy day had been followed by a stormy evening. We could hear the hail driven every now and then against the windows with startling violence; the wind roared in the chimneys and howled among the trees, whose branches gave out agonised creaks in the strong gusts. The fireside was decidedly the right place to be in just then. "This is pleasanter than Moscow," said Clifton, with the first attempt at a smile that either of us had made since we sat down. "Decidedly so," I answered; "pleasanter than any other place I can think of at this moment." "Just my idea," replied he. "That row outside—I shall be sure to find some trees down in the morning, but never mind—that row in some way or another greatly enhances the comfort of the hearth. I am glad I told Millett to turn down the lights."

"Yes, the glow of the fire seems the right thing. Lots of shadows and all sorts of unearthly noises. Just the time when one gets into a credulous mood, and can take in tales such as bards

'In sage and solemn tunes have sung
Of tourneys and of trophies hung;
Of forests and enchantments drear,
Where more is meant than meets the ear.'"

"By Jove! yes. Do you believe in ghosts? I can't say I don't; and I don't know that I very distinctly do."

"Not a very decided confession of faith," said I. "But, in truth, one must word one's creed carefully nowadays; for there are so many new-fangled ideas about the invisible world that you don't know what you may be assenting to if you make a simple profession of belief."

"Yes; the terrible old sheeted spectre of our boyish days is very nearly exploded. I must say I rather regret it. Spiritualism seems to be the modern form of superstition."

"Oh, it hardly amounts to superstition. Don't call it so, Clifton. It is nothing but the most wretched, shallow, charlatanry."

"Well, come, I don't know. Some of its phenomena are surely as well attested as the pranks of our old friends of the churchyard."

"Attested or not, I denounce it because of its utter uselessness. With all the wonderful powers which it professes to bring into action, do we get a bit wiser? I never heard of any of the spirits interfering for any good or reasonable purpose."

"Yes; you may take that ground. Whether there be anything aston-

ishing about it or not, it does not repay the trouble of investigation."

"Of course not. The character of its professors pretty well explains what it is. A parcel of keen, designing fellows make money by it. It would be different if educated, disinterested persons thought it worth their notice."

"H'm, perhaps; but I can't say I think that argument so strong as the other."

"You surely admit that the credit of a science, art,—whatever you choose to call it,—must be very low when it is practised and preached chiefly by persons who do not otherwise enjoy a great reputation for accuracy or conscientiousness, perhaps quite the reverse."

"Of course I admit that a thing brought out under questionable sponsorship will justly be regarded with suspicion. But whatever we may suspect, nothing is proved for or against by the character of the agents or professors."

"I don't quite follow you. I think a great deal is proved."

"No," said Clifton. "Look here. If there be any truth in these things—spiritualism, clairvoyance, divination, fortune-telling, I don't care what you call them—there must be, behind the wizard, or medium, or somnambulist, some power greater than human. Now, then, why should such a power choose as we would choose? why should it select the learned, the wise, the good, to be the recipients of its revelations?"

"Well, of course, I can't answer," said I.

"More than that," said Clifton, rather warming in his argument—"if the powers which tell these strange things be, as many would have us believe, evil spirits, is it not conceivable that they might, out of wickedness or wantonness,

choose to make their announcements through some vile and contemptible channels?"

"You are miles beyond me in weird science. I shall only listen."

"Well, you haven't got much more to hear," said Clifton; "but you know it is just possible that spirits, from some motives of secrecy and mystery—just to avoid the inquisitiveness of minds accustomed to investigation—may reveal themselves through beings who do not half comprehend, and do not care to speculate on, the import of what they utter."

"May be so," said I; "but we are getting into very misty regions now."

"I think such an idea as that makes one understand how gipsies, spae-wives, and clairvoyants may sometimes utter oracles concerning things of which naturally they have no knowledge, and in which they feel no interest."

"Pardon me, Clifton," said I, "but you seem to me to speak as if you had some experience or other of such things."

"My dear fellow, everybody has had such experience, only some banish it from their minds. Think, now,—has something odd never come within your own knowledge?"

"By Jove! I do remember one or two strange inexplicable things—coincidences."

"Yes; well I have had knowledge of some coincidences too."

"Anything worth telling?"

"Well, of my own, no. But I have been thinking during these five minutes of something on record which I lighted on only a few weeks ago, and which has led me to ponder a good deal over these matters. By the by, it has something to do with the Madeira we are drinking; for our connection with the Spences, through whom my father obtained this wine, arose

out of the circumstances of which I found the account."

"Just listen to that gust of wind. Well for you that your house is pretty solidly built, or we must have heard something crash before now. Suppose you stir the fire a little, or let me; I declare I am becoming quite nervous."

"Then help yourself to wine. I was hunting, you know, for something to throw light on that Ledyard dispute. It was imagined that my grandfather, having been so long in the regiment with old General Ledyard, might possibly have known something about his testamentary doings or intentions, and so I was requested to look among some heaps of old papers."

"Ah! and you were mysteriously guided to something explanatory of the whole secret. There's some sense in that."

"Not a bit of it. I couldn't find a word even bearing upon the Ledyard affair. But I found a little family narrative which seemed to have been carefully drawn up by some indifferent person who had the whole of the facts presented to him of an episode in the early regimental life of my grandfather. We have been accustomed to think of him, you know, as a superior officer in the great wars under Cornwallis and Baird in India, and afterwards under Moore and Wellesley in Spain. But this story shows him to us as quite a fresh ensign. I confess I read it with a good deal of interest."

"Already you have kindled a similar interest me. I feel that the *horrentia Martis arma*, in connection with which we have been accustomed to think of the general, have just now shrunk into nothing beside the youthful ensign, *gracili modulatus avenâ*, or whatever was the fancy of his early romance. After thus rousing curiosity you cannot refuse to gratify it. The

tempest, the hour, are in keeping with the recital of a strange legend."

"I don't want in the least to make a secret of the thing," answered Clifton; "only it's a longish yarn. I haven't got it up perfectly, or I would abbreviate it. 'Twon't be in the least tedious to me to go over it all again; so, if you still wish for the story after hearing that it's lengthy, I'll fetch it at once."

I persisted in my request, and Clifton, after a short absence, during which he was heard making a considerable noise with the bolts of locks, came back into the dining-room, bearing a manuscript on foolscap, which had turned yellow from age, and was spotted in places. The leaves were tied together with silk ribbon, which also had turned from white to yellow. It was written in an even round hand, such as a clerk's or scrivener's. The heading of the MS. was, "An Account of Some Passages in the Early Life of General Sir Godfrey Clifton, K.B.;" and it bore at the end the initials "G. C.;" but the story was told in the third person. Many times since that evening have I pored over its pages. I am two days' journey from Clifton now, so cannot give the exact words of the narrator, but if the reader will trust me he shall hear the substance of what he read, which is as follows:—

In the autumn of the year 1777, the freight-ship *Berkeley Castle*, of 600 tons burthen, sailed from Deal for Montego Bay, on the north side of the island of Jamaica. It was hoped that she would reach her destination a little before Christmas, she being laden with supplies which would be required at that season. Her state-rooms were not numerous; and it was only by the master turning out of his cabin and getting some accom-

modation rigged up for himself between decks, that she could take the few passengers who sailed in her. These were mostly, but not all, connected with a regiment at that time stationed in the neighbourhood of Montego Bay. Traveling in Jamaica was not so easy a matter in those days as it is now; so those who were to serve on the north side found it convenient to be landed at a northern port. Dr Salmon, a military surgeon, his wife, and his daughter Flora, aged eighteen, were a little family party; and, appointed to the same regiment to which Dr Salmon belonged, there was Ensign Clifton, a young man of good family. The passenger, however, who sailed in the greatest state was a young lady who had been at school in Edinburgh, and was now returning home in charge of the master of the vessel. Every luxury that wealth could buy had been supplied to make the voyage agreeable to her; she was attended by two negresses; her dresses and ornaments were of a most costly description, and seemed inexhaustible. Miss Arabella Chisholm was evidently a personage of some consequence in her own land; and, let it be remarked, she could not have passed unnoticed anywhere. She was a remarkably pretty and well-shaped girl—a brunette, but such a splendid one as it was dangerous for young men to look on. Beside these there was a young man named Spence, also a Creole by birth, but a pure white.* He had been several years in England, had just taken his degree at Cambridge, and was now on his way back to his father's estate. Six, therefore, was the number of the cabin passengers, who, after a day or two (for they sailed in bright, calm weather), all

showed themselves at the cuddy-table, and began an acquaintance which was to last, if all should go well, for more than twa months. Two young ladies and two young gentlemen embarked together seemed likely enough to make the time pass pleasantly. The ensign had his seat at table next to Miss Salmon, but he sat opposite to the lovely brunette, by whose side Mr Spence was established, in right of an old acquaintance of their families, if not of themselves, and the neighbourhood of their estates. And Miss Salmon was a young lady by whose side, in nineteen voyages out of twenty, a young officer would have thought it a great privilege to sit. She was very nice-looking, pleasant, and rather witty in her conversation, and quiet and lady-like in her manner. But on this occasion the blaze and animation of the Jamaica belle threw her a little into shadow. Their first dinner was a cheerful one, at which everybody showed a wish to be friendly. The weather-beaten skipper was most attentive to Mrs Salmon, who sat on his right, and told her stories innumerable about the wonderful country to which she was going,—oysters growing on trees, crabs crawling about the hill-tops miles from the sea, cabbages rising sixty feet from the ground—and so on.

They liked each other's company so much that they sat a good while after dinner on this first occasion, and it was too cold for the ladies to go on deck afterwards; so the gentlemen only walked the poop, and smoked in the twilight.

"You and Miss Chisholm have been acquainted before, have you not, Mr Spence?" asked young Clifton, while they thus paced.

"It is very possible that we

* *Creole* means "born in the West Indies;" thus Creoles may be of any colour.

have," answered Mr Spence; "but I have not the least recollection of her. It is nine years since I left Jamaica. I remember Mr Chisholm, though not very distinctly; but could not have said a week ago whether there were children at his house or not."

"I fancy that your information will be much more accurate after you get home, eh, Dr Salmon?" said the skipper. "By George, sir! old Sandy Chisholm, as they call her father, is one of the richest men on the island. I don't know how many estates he owns."

"Rich enough, I should think, by the style in which the young lady is appointed," answered the doctor.

"And I think I can tell you young men something," rejoined the skipper, in a confidential tone. "Mr Chisholm is exceedingly anxious that this daughter should marry well, and will give a very handsome fortune to a son-in-law of whom he may approve."

"However much she may bring her husband, I think she will know how to spend it, ha, ha!" laughed Dr Salmon.

"No, doctor, don't say so," returned the skipper, who seemed a little jealous of the opinion entertained of his temporary ward. "Their habits appear more extravagant than those of people at home, without really being so. Their methods of spending money are restricted, and they lean a good deal towards dress and gewgaws. With an English education, such as my young friend has had, they make clever, sensible women."

"Perhaps so, perhaps so," conceded the doctor, somewhat grudgingly. "It would be as well, though, for a young fellow who might feel inclined to bid for the fortune, to consider how a handsome, extravagant wife might be disposed to deal with it."

"By Jove, sir!" said the gallant skipper, stopping short in his walk, and withdrawing his pipe from his lips with decision, "I only wish I was a smart young bachelor this day; if I wouldn't go in and try my luck, there's no salt in seawater."

"Bravo, captain!" said young Clifton.

"You know," pursued the skipper, calming down again, after his little burst of excitement, "her father insists upon her 'doing things in style,' as he calls it. The display and luxury may be set down to the old gentleman's account. Those two negresses, now, he sent home with me last voyage, and had 'em kept in England five months so that they might be ready to attend their young mistress on her voyage out."

"I wonder," put in Mr Spence, "that he didn't frank some white married couple on a trip to England that they might return in charge of the young lady. I have known that done before to-day."

While the gentlemen were thus discoursing on the poop, the subject of their conversation was below showing a disposition to be very friendly with Mrs and Miss Salmon. Those ladies, so affably encountered, were not long, one may be sure, before they made some observations on Arabella's rich dress and ornaments; whereat Miss Chisholm, far from being displeased, entered into descriptions of all the treasures contained in her voluminous baggage, and promised to gratify them with a sight of the same.

"But how can you do it?" objected Miss Salmon, whose prophetic mind foresaw a difficulty in the way of this gratification. "You cannot have all these packages in your cabin, and the captain's directions were that we were to keep with us everything likely to be

wanted for use, as none of the heavy things which had been lowered into the hold could be disturbed during the voyage."

"The captain's directions!" echoed Miss Chisholm, with disdain. "What do I care for the captain's directions? There are plenty of sailors in the ship to pull things up and down, and when I wish to have my chests and trunks brought up they will have to bring them." Her look seemed to add, "Nay, I'll tickle ye for a young Creole princess, i' faith." This imperious demeanour somewhat astonished the military ladies, who had no experience of Creole princesses, and believed that before all things it was necessary that "disciplines ought to be used." Arabella was not half so fond of answering the other ladies' questions about her native island, as she was of talking about her life in England; which perhaps was natural. She had been a child in Jamaica, but in England had expanded towards womanhood, and acquired new sentiments, new ideas, new aspirations, all of which were foreign to her West India recollections. She said she would be delighted to see her father again, but she feared she would find the island dull; "and if so," she remarked, "I shall make my papa go home for good. He has wasted quite enough of his life in the stupid colony." Her new acquaintances, who hardly knew what it was to move independently, marvelled at all this wilfulness.

The Creole beauty was as good as her word about her baggage. The captain, although he yielded to her as to a spoiled child, calling her "My dear," and made as though he were spontaneously according these exceptional indulgences, did nevertheless let her have her way; and the tars were manning the tackle and shifting the luggage as

often as, and for as long as, it pleased Miss Arabella Chisholm to require their services in this way.

Mrs Salmon told her husband that there was something very frank and winning about the handsome Creole. She was good-natured too, and had forced upon Miss Salmon's acceptance trinkets and other treasures which the latter young lady had admired. "But do you know," added Mrs Salmon, "her conversation is too free on some subjects—hardly what I call nice. When the two girls are alone, she says things to Flora about young men and love-making which it quite distresses our girl to hear, for she isn't accustomed to those subjects. I hardly know what to do about it."

"You can do nothing, I am afraid," answered Dr Salmon; "Miss Chisholm means nothing wrong, I am persuaded; and we must impute to her tropical blood and her early education among coloured people this foreign style. Flora is too well principled to be hurt by it; and as she will not encourage it, Miss Chisholm will probably soon find that other subjects would be more agreeable."

"My dear, she will find nothing of the sort. She will allow nothing and do nothing but what she pleases. There never was such an arbitrary creature."

"Well, well," answered the doctor, "the voyage is not to last for ever. Explain to Flora that this is not an English young lady, and therefore that she does not deserve the censure which we should direct against a countrywoman allowing herself such licence. As long as she has her mother to guide her, I feel quite easy about Flora's sense of propriety,"—with which compliment to his wife's good sense Dr Salmon closed the conversation, drew in his head and went to sleep; for they had been talking in

their state-room, where they lay in little berths one over the other, and the doctor, being in the nether compartment, had to put out his head to listen to the oracles which came to him from above.

The same night on which this conversation occurred there were minds occupied with Miss Arabella in other cabins than the doctor's. Mr Spence, tossing in his berth, was reflecting that he, in right of his Creole origin and strong claims of family, was, under present circumstances, Arabella's natural ally, attendant, and sympathiser; and that she was bound to be a great deal more familiar and confidential with him than with that rather pensive and genteel ensign, whose natural affinity was with Miss Salmon. He did not venture, even in thought, to lay claim to more than this, though it is to be feared that neighbourly frankness would have gone but a small way towards satisfying the craving of his heart. Like a turbulent patriot, who puts in a reasonable demand for toleration and equal rights, when in his heart he abhors both liberty and equality, and aims at tyranny, so the self-deluding Spence fretted himself about the rights of neighbours, while already it was an idea of exclusive rights which was making him so restless. The young fellow was considerably smitten.

However reasonable Spence might take his own notions and arrangements to be, Ensign Clifton could not help seeing things in a very different light. In that young officer's judgment, Miss Salmon and Mr Spence appeared to be admirably fitted for each other. As for Spence pretending to a lady so brilliant as Miss Chisholm, the idea was preposterous: it was a violation of the eternal fitness of things: it could not by possibility tend to promote the happiness of anybody,

and might be productive of much misery. Now, for a calm bystander who could see all this mischief brewing, not to try and prevent it would have been gross dereliction of duty. And Clifton thought himself a calm philosophic bystander, laying claim to that character on the ground of a passion which he had entertained for a cousin some five years older than himself, who had thought him very clever when he was fifteen. For more than a year it was his dream to make this cousin his bride after he had raised himself to eminence; but the vision was disturbed by intelligence that a captain of dragoons, who considered himself already sufficiently eminent for the achievement, was about to marry her. The stricken youth mourned becomingly, then hardened his heart to study and ambition. He even grew to think that it would facilitate his future career to be thus early acclimatised to the trying air of love: he learned to set a value upon his scar, and to feel that the crushing of his affections gave him an immense advantage over even older men who were still vulnerable about the heart. So the ensign thought that while the voyage lasted it would be as well to obtain as large a share as he could of Miss Chisholm's attention, just to shield her (she being very young and inexperienced) from plunging into mischief. Once they were on shore his responsibility would be over. It would be another thing then; and her father being at hand to care for her, it would be the father's affair, and very unfortunate if she should form an imprudent attachment—that was all. And Ensign Clifton sighed deeply, and turned himself over in his berth, as he came to this conclusion.

Miss Salmon had her thoughts too, as the Berkeley Castle, on this bright night, being now clear of

the Bay of Biscay, walked steadily before the wind towards Madeira. And there was something in Miss Salmon's mind which coincided curiously with a thought which has been ascribed to Mr Spence. Flora Salmon was beginning to see very strongly the natural affinity between Mr Clifton and herself. They belonged to the same profession in a manner; at any rate they must have many ideas in common. Their lots might be cast in the same place for a long time to come. She, Flora, was perhaps a little more sprightly and *spirituelle* than the ensign; but what of that? it only made her more fit to be his companion and complement. He was very nice and gentlemanly, if a little shy and silent. Flora didn't think at all the worse of him because he wasn't noisy and silly like many ensigns whom it had been her lot to mark; but why didn't he recognise the claims of his own cloth? It would not have been surprising if one of the brainless subalterns, of whom she had then two or three in her mind's eye, had been taken with the handsome person and not very reserved conversation of the sparkling Creole. They were incapable of appreciating anything which did not lie on the surface; but of Mr Clifton, who seemed to have a mind, better things might have been expected. It is just possible, too, that Flora perceived, or perhaps she had been informed, that Clifton was a youth of good family, and of a fortune that made him independent of his profession; but she didn't confess to herself that this had anything to do with her grievance, which she rested on general, open, unselfish grounds. Yet Miss Salmon was hardly just to Arabella. The latter young lady was not merely a pretty compound of pretension and coquetry, notwithstand-

ing her wilfulness and variableness, and the trivial matters which often seemed to occupy her. Her caprices were not without their charm, and and sometimes, though rarely, they spirited her into moods of reverie and feeling which were but the more winning from their suddenness and rarity.

“If tenderness touched her, the dark of her eye
At once took a darker, a heavenlier dye,
From the depths of whose shadow, like
holy revealings
From innermost shrines, came the light
of her feelings!”

Miss Chisholm, while all these cogitations were going on, had fallen very happily to sleep. She had been accustomed to have her own way in most things, and there was nothing in the situation on board ship to hinder her sovereign will in the least. She may have been utterly indifferent about both the young men on board, or she may have preferred one to the other. However this may have been, she had not the least doubt about being able to please herself whenever she might ascertain what her own pleasure was. And so she dropped asleep tranquilly and early. A moonbeam, slanting into her cabin as she lay in her first slumber, glanced on the accurate moulding of an arm which, escaped from the loose night-dress, was thrown high on her pillow, and wound over the crown of her head, beyond which the hand rested in shadow. The sheen played softly on the curves of the regular features, and caught the tangles of her luxuriant hair in such wise as to graze each tress with a streak of light. In the day her tresses were of a rich dark brown, very effective in their mass, though the strands were not particularly fine; but this *chiaroscuro* gave them an unearthly richness, and made the lace about her neck,

which peeped between their folds, gleam like fretted silver. We hear sweet things said about the sleep of virtue, and the sleep of innocence, also of the slumber of a mind at peace with itself; but the slumber of a young lady entirely satisfied with herself and with her lot, wants nothing that goodness or purity or quiet conscience could give. It is a tranquillity which accident may scare from the pillow; but while it lasts it is excellent.

The voyage proceeded prosperously. Rolling down the Trades is generally a not very checkered or perilous course; but the days, if uneventful, were not tedious to the passengers. Dr and Mrs Salmon had had too much of the bustle, and too many of the vicissitudes of life, to chafe at two or three weeks of calm, bright, listless days; and as for the rest of the company, they were all busily engaged in a little drama which was to reach its *dénouement* in other scenes; and the sameness was no sameness to them.

Flora and Arabella were in the latter's state-room, rummaging among a profusion of jewels and ornaments. Flora had never handled so many treasures in her life; and though she had sense enough to be somewhat angry with herself for being so delighted, yet the woman was strong in her, and she revelled among the gems and gold. One article after another was taken up and admired, and pronounced to be the most beautiful that ever was seen, until the next came up for criticism, and was in its turn found to surpass all others. A Maltese cross had just been returned to the case with a glowing eulogium, and was now being utterly eclipsed by a set of emeralds which took away Flora's breath. "Well, I never saw anything like it," said she; "how lovely!—how very lovely!"

"Flora," said Miss Chisholm,

"I shall leave those emeralds to you when I die."

"Oh, will you?" said Flora, who was quick at a joke; "then if I live to be ninety I may deck my ruins with emeralds."

"A shorter life than that may bring you the bequest. I wasn't trifling." Then, said Arabella, after an instant's pause, "Flora, do you believe in spirits?"

"Certainly," answered Miss Salmon, astonished.

"Do you ever see them?"

"See them! no. They cannot be seen."

"I see them," said Arabella, in a subdued, mysterious manner. "All my life I have seen strange things, and they impress me always with the idea that my life will not last long."

"Nonsense," said Flora; "you should not allow yourself to think of such things."

"They do: they make me sad, so that I almost wish to die. Is it not dreadful?"

"It is dreadful if you give way to it, my dear. You must be ailing. Will you speak to my father about it?"

"No, Flora, not for the world. I don't give way. But my heart is sore sometimes. You shall have the emeralds."

"Thank you," said Flora; "but don't encourage morbid thoughts. It isn't right."

"Very well, then, let's laugh;" and Arabella was immediately in a new mood.

The reader will scarcely consider his credulity too severely taxed if he is asked to believe that Ensign Clifton soon descended from his platform of exalted benevolence towards Miss Chisholm, and became her devoted admirer. He had not found it easy to come between her and Mr Spence, except just when it was her pleasure that he should

do so. She, and not he, pulled the wires; and after a little while he submitted to his fate and moved as he was impelled by the guiding power. Each young man got his share of sunshine, and neither could flatter himself long with the idea that he was preferred. Miss Salmon was hardly an unbiassed judge; but she (in bitterness of disappointment perhaps) thought that Clifton was the favourite.

One evening when they were approaching the Gulf of Mexico, Arabella was seated on a luxurious pile of cushions and wraps, looking over the ship's side. Clifton, who had managed to be in possession of her, was standing near, leaning on the gunwale. The girl was chattering earnestly about the grandeur of her father's house, his slaves, and his establishment, and declaring what great things should be done at home under her influence. When she gave him the chance of putting in a word, Clifton said it made him sad to hear of the magnificence to which she was going. Of course the wily youth intended to provoke a question, in answer to which he was going to deprecate pathetically the distance which so much wealth would interpose between her and a subaltern of low degree. Her reply might possibly have given some comfort to his soul. But Arabella somewhat disconcerted him, by changing her manner suddenly and saying, "Yes; it makes me very sad too." His little plot thus foiled, it was now Clifton's turn to demand the meaning of what had been said.

"Well," answered Arabella, softly, "money, and negroes, and a fine house, and ever so much gaiety, don't bring happiness, do they?"

Clifton wasn't ready with an answer; and, after an instant's pause, Arabella went on. "I feel sometimes, when I am thinking, as

if I could be very miserable with all the comfort that I shall live in. There's something one wants that isn't in these fine things, isn't there? I don't know what it is, but it seems to be something far away, out of one's reach, you know; and I feel I shall never get it, and I shall be miserable among all my luxury."

"You desire sympathy, affection, Miss Chisholm," ventured Clifton, cutting in very cleverly for so young a player at the game. "Surely that is not a matter for *you* to be unhappy about. Your wealth is only fortune's gift, but you can command sympathy, and, and——" the boy hesitated, partly from want of courage, and partly from the fascination which her unwonted looks exercised. Her long lashes were drooping over her eyes; her features expressed gentle sadness; the lips were parted, and her bosom rose with a sigh which was almost a sob.

"No," said she, "it is something that I never shall obtain,—never, never. I know that I shall not live very long. I can't tell how I know it, but I do."

If Clifton thought his opportunity was now come he was mistaken. No sooner did he attempt to avail himself of her soft mood than she shook herself into a merry laugh, saying, while the moisture could be seen in her reopened eyes, "How foolish one can be! Mr Clifton, you make me quite melancholy. Oh, come here, Mr Spence, if you please, and say something amusing. I know you can be entertaining if you like."

This day's experience did not lighten Clifton's heart a bit. While he thought Arabella a thousand times better worth winning than ever, he thought her a thousand times further removed beyond his reach. But he was making more

progress than he knew of—indeed, more than she knew of either. Arabella was after a time conscious that she was rather pleased with the young man. But this, she was sure, was only a passing fancy. And teasing him passed the time so merrily! Yet she was venturing rashly.

At last the good ship reached her port. The north side of Jamaica showed itself one splendid evening, with its park-like slopes backed by the giant hills; all the colours of the rainbow smiled and glowed on its broken surface; and the beautiful town of Montego Bay, decked in white and green, lay a crescent on the shore, and grasped the bright glowing harbour in its span. The black pilot came off while they were all overcome with the glory of the sunset, but he thought it better not to go in to the anchorage at once. "Bettar lay off to-night, sar; soon as de daylight come, me will take you in." This was not an inconvenient arrangement for the passengers. The Berkeley Castle was recognised by those on shore before sunset, and there would be plenty of time in the morning to come down with a welcome from Blenheim, Sandy Chisholm's place; from Stubbs Castle, the abode of Mr Spence's father; and from Elsinore, where lay the detachment to which Ensign Clifton would belong. Accordingly, when, soon after daybreak the next morning, the ship's anchor was dropped, boat-loads of demonstrative friends surrounded her berth. She was boarded first by two washerwomen, who stopped on the ladder to fight till the mate rope's-ended them, and who afterwards attempted to renew the combat on the quarter-deck. Then followed a troop of sable ladies and gentlemen offering mangoes, cocoanuts, star-apples, bread-nuts, *alligator*-pears (as they are called),

spruce-beer, and a great assortment of island dainties which delighted Jack after his voyage. While these were making their rush for the deck, Miss Chisholm recognised her father in a large barge, seemingly delighted at the sight of her; and Ensign Clifton saw the badge of his regiment on the dress of some persons in another and smaller boat. The skipper himself stood at the gangway to receive Sandy Chisholm. He did not take off his hat to that personage, because the fashion of that country is for everybody to shake hands with everybody; but he showed by his manner (as indeed Sandy Chisholm showed by his), that as long as the latter gentleman should be pleased to remain on board, the whole ship would be at his commandment. Sandy caught his daughter in his arms, then he held her off to look at her, then pronounced her "bonny," and kissed her again: after which salutations, he issued orders about the barge and baggage to a henchman who attended, in that kind of style which we consider appropriate to the Great Mogul or the Grand Lama—orders which a troop of niggers, his own property, and all the sailors in the ship, hastened to execute. He then said a few patronising words to the skipper, whom he thanked for bringing him this "bonny bit of mairchandize" (parenthetically kissing the "mairchandize" again), and whom he made free of Blenheim during the ship's stay. This done, Arabella said she must introduce her fellow-voyagers, with all of whom the great Sandy shook hands, and to each and all of whom he then and there offered unlimited hospitality. As for Mrs and Miss Salmon, he insisted on taking them home with him until they could be joined by the doctor, who had first to go and report himself; and

as for Mr Spence, he said he was right glad to see his father's son. Ensign Clifton, of course, got a shake of the magnate's hand, and was enjoined to make his appearance at Blenheim to see his "auld messmate" (which meant his young idol) "as airy as possible." Half an hour after that, the passengers were all on shore.

Clifton, after reporting himself to his colonel at Montego Bay, was ordered, as he expected, to Elsinore, which was a large country-house, unoccupied by the proprietor, and so a convenient place of sojourn for a detachment of troops which had been ordered temporarily to that region in consequence of some turbulence among the negroes. There is a great deal in the MS. concerning the impression made upon the pensive ensign by the magnificent scenery of the island, the details of which I omit, seeing that in these lettered days, they may be found elsewhere. Suffice it to say that the gorgeous colours, the ripe vegetation extending down to the tide-line and toppling over into the sea in the struggle for existence, the charmingly broken contour of the glorious hills, soothed in some degree the anxiety of his breast, and made him wonder how such scenes could be associated with pestilence and death.

It was Clifton's opinion at this period of his life that to come among a set of hearty, high-spirited comrades in a strange and beautiful country is the best possible antidote for melancholy; but at the date of the MS. (some years after) he had modified this opinion, and thought that the monotony of a military life in quarters is in itself depressing. *Tempora mutantur*. It is, however, pretty plain that his jolly friends, and the novelties of the West Indies, delighted him greatly; and if absence made his

heart grow fonder at odd times, when he found himself alone, their society prevented him from falling a prey to love-sickness. There was very little duty to do, and so these young heroes improved the occasion of their sojourn among the spurs of the mountains by roaming the country, looking after all that was worth seeing, which, according to their practice, included a great deal that was not worth seeing at all. However, the restlessness kept them in exercise, and that was a good thing.

One day, not long after Clifton's arrival, a member of the little mess announced at dinner that he had discovered an old witch; which announcement was received with derisive cheers and much incredulity. The discoverer, however, was not very seriously affected by the humour of his audience, but went on to say where he had heard of the old lady, and to tell of the marvellous things that she had done. She was a negress, and to be found at Higson's Gap, an estate belonging to that rich old fellow Sandy Chisholm. She had predicted marriages, shipwrecks, deaths, inheritances; had penetrated secrets which were supposed to be locked in one breast alone; had mapped out the destinies of certain individuals in oracles, which had been fulfilled to the letter; had held communion with *duppies*—that is to say, ghosts—and had extracted the knowledge which lay hid with them beyond this world. Of course, there was a superior man present who asked how a sensible being could believe such confounded nonsense. Of course, the discoverer of the old lady knew that the facts were too well attested to be treated as nonsense at all. Of course, the company disputed the matter as if it had been one of life and death; and very fortunately the dispute ended in a

bet, not a fight. The property of five doubloons hung in the balance until the proof or the failure of the old lady's skill should incline the scale. An expedition to Higson's Gap, nine or ten miles distant, was arranged for the morrow by four of them; and all was good-humour again.

"I tell you what it is, Dix," said he who had first made mention of the sorceress the night before, "I had this from old Henriquez, the merchant in town, and he wouldn't be likely to make more of it than it was worth; besides, he told me to use his name to the *busha** at Higson's Gap if I chose to go and try the old lady."

"Did he?" answered Dix. "I've a great opinion of Henriquez, you know. Cashes my bills. Knows some friends of mine. Devilish rich, liberal old boy. So, Marten, my good fellow, we won't dispute any more just now; we shall soon see what she can do. I'm glad you have an introduction to the busha, though, because he'll give us some second breakfast."

Spite of the heat the young men pushed on, pulling up at various houses to ask their way, and always receiving an invitation to drink as well as the information they demanded. At last they rode through a gateway without a gate, over a villanously rough road, where their horses with difficulty could be kept from stumbling, and got safely into what in England would be called the farmyard of Higson's Gap. On one side of this stood the busha's house, supported upon piers, obviously with the intent that there should be a circulation of air between the inhabitants and the ground. But this intent had been in some degree frustrated, because a large portion of the space

below had been boarded in and turned into rooms of some sort. The busha, from his veranda above, saw the arrival of the strangers, and descended to meet them. He was standing on the steps as they rode up, and called out, 'Here, 'Kiah, Jubal! come, take the gentlemen's horses; cool them, and then come to me for some corn; hear?'

"Yes, massa," responded two darkies, appearing from somewhere about the premises; and when the young men had dismounted, they were hospitably invited to walk up and take a drink. Hereupon Marten pronounced the potent name of Henriquez,—said that he had told them of the fame of the old negress on the property, and that they had come to test her power, which seemed a most strange thing to them, they being officers not long out from England. And then the busha told them he was delighted to find that they were not mere passengers, but had come to pay a visit to himself; and he bade them all to second breakfast, but recommended, in the meantime, that they should refresh with rum and water. Ice never found its way to Jamaica in those days—they trusted to the porous goglets for cooling their water; and unless the domestics were careful to place these in the breeze, the cooling was but imperfectly done, and the comfort of the drink far less than it might have been. The busha was a tall, raw-boned young man, all over freckles except his long neck, which the sun had roasted to the colour of new copper. A very civil, honest fellow he was, but he had unfortunately some idea that he was a beau. His breeches and boots, though decidedly the worse for wear, had evidently been moulded with some attempt at style, and there was a picture of him against

* Negro name for overseer; often used, also, as a slang name for the same.

the wall of his hall which exhibited some hopelessly depraved artist's idea of a *petit maître*.

"Another drink, sir; you've had a long ride," said he to Dix. But Dix required no more at present. Might it not be as well if they were to visit the old lady before second breakfast? Was she really as clever as was reported?

"Well, sir," answered the overseer, "I think I know a little about the sex; but I confess she puzzles me. A huge lot of what she says is right. I used to think she had agents among the people who brought her information;—they're confounded cunning, you know, especially the women—but no confederate could help her to some of her guesses, or whatever you may like to call them. Now, there was my predecessor out there" (and he pointed through the jalousies to a tomb over against the house), "she told him he would make a black Christmas; and he died on Christmas-eve, and was buried on Christmas-day. Odd, wasn't it?"

"Does she work on the estate?"

"Well, no, sir; she doesn't work. She's been a person of some consequence when she was younger" (with a wink), "and now she's in an honourable retirement—sort of a dowager."

"Oh, indeed!"

"Bacchus, go see where Mammy Cis is," called the overseer; on which a tall, thin, cadaverous negro, presenting himself at one of the numerous doors, answered, "He dere, massa; me see him jes' now."

"Very well, then, gentlemen, what do you say? Shall we go on and see her while they're laying the cloth?" and he led them down the steps, taking a glance, as he went, at a small mirror in the veranda, and adjusting his hat to a becoming cock.

The young men having heard of a dowager, and seeing the busha's

little reference to the glass, imagined that they were to be taken to a dower-house. But the busha's glance at his image or reflection was habitual, being the nearest approach he could make to the luxury enjoyed by society at large of looking on the original. The dower-house was part of the boarded space under the room where they had been sitting. Passing round to the gable-end after they descended to the ground, the gentlemen saw an apartment, open at one end, in which perhaps a chaise might occasionally have been placed, or something which might be not of sufficient value, or not sufficiently small, to stand in the house, and yet not weather-proof; or it was a place where a job of carpentry might be wrought, or where the people might do a little indoor work on a stormy day. The farther end was closed by a partition with a door in it, and this door the busha opened, letting out a villanous smell of salt fish. He called—

"Mammy Cis, come out a bit, will ye? Here's gentlemen come to see you. Smooth your ringlets, you know; and tighten your bodice and let down your skirt, for they're lively fellows." And here the busha, who had a pretty wit of his own, looked round, winked again, and laughed. As he did so, there issued through the door a stout mulatto woman of middle height. Her skin was greatly wrinkled, but her eyes were still bright, and her carriage good. It was impossible to guess how old she might be, for these coloured people, when their youth has once passed, wax hideous in a very short time. She had a striped handkerchief bound round her head, with the ends depending behind; a short skirt was tied about her waist, and over it was a wonderful robe, just drawn together at one point, and made of some bright-

ly-flowered material, which would have been all the better for a visit to the wash-tub. Stockings, which might by courtesy have been called white, covered her ankles, whereof one was neat and slim, and the other exhibited a leaning to elephantiasis. A pair of exceedingly misshapen slippers adorned her feet. Large bright drops hung in her ears, and a showy necklace was about her neck.

“Mornin’, gentlemen,” said the old lady, as she saluted the company with much dignity. Then she turned her glowing eyes upon the overseer, looked through him for an instant, and asked in a quiet voice, but with a very pointed manner, “Who is you making fun of, sar? Is dis your manners to a leady?”

The youth was embarrassed. He was evidently not disposed to incur the weird woman’s vengeance, and at the same time he was anxious, before the young officers, to maintain his superiority, and make good the sallies of his redundant wit.

“Accuse me of anything but that,” said the gallant busha. “Ill manners to a lady I could never be guilty of. You mistake, mammy, I’m sure. I wish to treat you with the very highest respect.” It was necessary to wink again, to make the irony of this apparent; but he gave a very timid wink, hardly daring to look toward the strangers.

“You tink it respeekful, sar, to talk to me about ringlets and about my skirt? And what you mean, sar, by bringing gentlemen to see me widout sending fust to inform me?”

“Really, mammy, I thought you knew everything so well without telling, that it was quite unnecessary to warn you.”

“You know, sar, dat is not true. Gentlemen, doan’t let dis young man persuade you dat I am fond

of making a show of myself. He knows better. He knows well dat, poor old woman as I am, I have plenty to care for me, and all my relations is not old and poor. He knows, too, dat it is not wise to be talking too freely about dis and dat dat I knows.”

At all hazards, temporal and spiritual, the busha was constrained to wink when he was accused of saying what was not true, that he might demonstrate the exquisite flavour of the joke; but he was not at all comfortable when the wise woman boasted about her influence in this world, and the indiscretion of talking of her dealings with the other. It was a relief to him when she turned to look at the group of strangers. Her eye fell on Clifton, and she uttered, with emphasis, the exclamation, “Hei!” He appeared in some way to interest her. But before she could speak to him, Dix, impatient for some sorcery, stepped forward, and said, “The fact is, old lady, that we heard you could do something in the conjuring line, and we were geese enough to take a ride through the sun to witness your art. It looks very like nonsense, I’m afraid.”

“Perhaps so, sar,” said the sorceress, very calmly. “I wish for nobody to tink me a conjuror, as you call it. Well for you if I am not.”

Hereupon Marten, who had more patience, and, as he fancied, more tact than his friend, stepped up and put a silver dollar in Mammy Cis’s hand, saying at the same time in a soothing tone, “Come now, old girl, that will make it right, I daresay. Now, please, tell me my fortune.”

“Look he’, sar,” said the old woman, drawing herself up; “you tink I want for you dollar? Chaw! I know where to get money in plenty if I want it. You is mis-

taken ; for true you is. Take back de silber, and tank you all de same !” and she returned the dollar with a magnificent air.

It only remained now for the fourth of the party, whose name was Worth, to try his luck, and he fortunately chose to begin with a little fair speaking.

“ Really, ma’am,” said he, “ I think we have been presumptuous in supposing that there was anything in the fortunes of ordinary people like us for spirits to care about. If there is nothing to tell, we must only regret having troubled you, but if anything occurs to you worth mentioning, and you would be good enough——”

“ Dere is something to tell, sar ; and since you is polite, I have de pleasure of informing you dat, before you sleeps to-night, you will hear of something dat will sweet * you greatly.”

“ Indeed ! and what is it ?”

“ I can’t say, sar, but you will see.” Then turning to Marten again, with something like a smile, she said to him, “ Since you is so kind as to offer me money, sar, I can’t do less dan tell you dat some money is comin’ to you, but instead of silber you will get gold. My king, you is lucky.”

“ A piece of good news,—a bag of gold,” put in Dix, sarcastically ; “ you know, old lady, we can get quite as good conjuring as this under a hedge in England. I can guess what the next announcement will be. You will promise me a princess for a wife ; isn’t that it ?”

At mention of the princess, the busha eyed Lieutenant Dix much as a sportsman eyes a poacher. But there was not time for him to make a remark, for Mammy Cis sternly took up her parable and said, “ It is not a princess, sar ; and

if your tongue didn’t so long, I shouldn’t speak to you at all. Come dis way, sar, and I will mention to you what I know privately. You can tell your friends or not, as you tink proper.”

After hesitating a little, Dix, with a derisive ejaculation and gesture, withdrew in the direction to which the old lady pointed, and she began to make to him a communication in an undertone. It had not proceeded far when the bystanders saw the young man turn as pale as death. In a moment he stamped furiously on the ground and burst away, swearing that she was the devil.

“ No, sar,” said Mammy Cis ; “ I am not de debbil. It is de debbil dat put sich tings in your heart.”

“ What has she told you, Dix ?” was the general cry.

“ Oh, curse her ! I can’t tell you. Something disagreeable to listen to, but, of course, a lie.”

The old lady did not speak in reply, but she glanced towards Dix, and “ held him with her glittering eye” for a second ; then released him. Dix, anxious for a diversion, then said, drawing Clifton forward, “ Here, give him some of your wisdom. He’s modest ; he hasn’t had any yet.”

Instead of addressing Clifton, the prophetess, in a theatrical attitude, put her hands before her face, as if to shut out some disagreeable sight, and turned her head away from him. While her look indicated intense distress, she said, “ Dis young buckra may bring much sorrow to me and mine ; but I see noting clear ; I can’t tell what it will be. For true, sar, trouble will come between you and me. My king ! my king ! But, sar, you doan’t seem to mean wrong, and de

trouble may pass. And now make me [*i.e., let me*] say what you will mind more than de griefs of an ole woman. You is prospering already in what is nearest to your heart; but where you want to bring joy you may bring a curse if you and others is not careful."

Clifton blushed at the first part of this prediction, and his heart bounded as it rushed to the interpretation. As to the second part, he could, in the pleasant idea which had been called up, find no place for it.

"By Jove! Clifton, you're in love. That must be it," exclaimed some of the youngsters; and the whole party laughed at his evident consciousness, while the overseer looked him over critically to discover what the devil there was about *him* that he should have a successful love affair. Meantime the sorceress called "Pinkie, Pinkie!" and thereupon a little negress issued from the interior apartment and stood awaiting the old lady's commands, while she improved the occasion by scratching her head. It seemed that she had been summoned only to give dignity to Mammy Cis's retreat; which Cis now accomplished, after dismissing her visitors in a stately manner, and giving a few more words of caution to the overseer.

Out in the air once more, the young men were soon laughing and chattering over a host of subjects, and the sorceress was for a moment out of mind. Their appetites reminded them, also, that they had breakfasted early, and they were not sorry to learn that the promised collation was nearly ready. They went above again, where they were accommodated with a basin, a towel, and a bucket of water, and left to perform their ablutions as they

could, each chucking the water he had used through the window. Meanwhile the busha got off his boots, and assumed a pair of silk stockings well darned, also a shirt with a frill and ruffles, and turned out quite a stunning figure.

If the second breakfast was somewhat rude, it was given with hearty goodwill; and it was distinguished by some remarkably fine rum-punch, the influence of which made the youngsters talk again of the visit to the fortune-teller.

"Now that old lady," observed Marten—"what humbug, to be sure!—is, I suppose, what is called an *obi* woman."

"Not at all," the overseer answered; "she uses no incantation, does nothing illegal,* and she abuses Obeah. I can't, either, call her one of the Myall people, who profess to undo the mischief of Obeah. She takes not the slightest trouble to impress visitors, and says she doesn't know how she comes by her knowledge."

"Knowledge, indeed!" echoed Worth. "I never saw a much poorer attempt at fortune-telling. I am to hear of some good luck before night, isn't that it? But I say, Dix, she seemed to astonish you."

"Curse her!" said Dix.

"I am to win gold," said Marten; "but as for you, Clifton——"

"My friend here," interrupted the busha, in an aggrieved, supercilious tone, "is going to win a lady."

And on that hint, and inspired by the punch, the busha turned the conversation on ladies; and it became very confidential—so much so, that the substance of what occurred up to the hour of the guests' departure, about four o'clock, never transpired, the only thing recorded

* The practice of Obrah was illegal; perhaps is so still.

being that they made the busha promise to come down and have an evening with them.

An orderly from Montego Bay was pacing before the door at Elsinore when the young men, powerfully refreshed, clattered up to the house. He had come up on an estate-cart most of the way, and been despatched by the adjutant.

"Holloa! what's up now?" sang out Marten, who was in front.

"Despatch for you, Worth; hope you're not to be moved."

Worth began to read the note carelessly, but his eyes soon expanded over it. "By Jove!" he exclaimed; "only think! Poor Rowley was this morning thrown from his horse against the angle of the barrack, and killed on the spot."

"You don't say so!" "Good heavens!" "Poor fellow!"

"And I get the company."

"By Jove! yes, of course. Glad of your luck, old fellow; but sorry for Rowley. Good fellow, Rowley."

No wonder that they were gloomy that evening. Felicitations for Worth would come hereafter when the promotion should be officially announced. They talked about Rowley, and kindly remembered all his good deeds, while most made arrangements for starting before daybreak to attend his funeral. In the midst of the regrets, Dix burst in with—

"By George! Worth, that ugly old devil said you would hear of some luck before night."

"So she did; how odd!" said they all.

"And she promised you gold, Marten. Here it is; not a large fortune—only five doubloons," added Dix, with a bitter smile.

"But, my dear fellow, don't be precipitate. This promotion of Worth's is only a coincidence. I don't feel at all satisfied that——"

"Take the money," said Dix, with an oath. "It isn't Worth's good luck that has convinced me. The wretch" (and he turned pale again) "told me darkly of what could not, I thought, be known to any one in the island but myself. Curse her!"

"The devil she did!" was the general rejoinder.

Clifton's heavy baggage had not yet come up. It was at that time lying by the roadside, somewhere about midway betwixt Montego Bay and Elsinore. In another week it was expected that it might make its appearance at the station. Clifton, therefore, could not get at his uniform, and could not conveniently appear at the funeral; which circumstance, as the others said, was not of consequence, as Clifton had never seen poor Rowley. So they arranged that he should remain about the station, which would enable all the others to go down; and to this arrangement Clifton readily agreed, because he had a little plan of his own which there would be now an opportunity of carrying out. He had scarcely mentioned Miss Chisholm's name, fearing lest his secret should be detected; and from the same shyness, he had refrained from making a visit to her. Nothing, perhaps, could have helped forward Clifton's cause more effectually than his thus postponing his visit to Blenheim. Arabella, accustomed to have everything done for her, had all her time disposable, and from the day of her arrival found some of it hang heavy during the hot hours. She had many apartments appropriated to herself, and among these was a gallery, formed to catch the grateful sea-breeze. Here she would swing in a grass hammock, and think over the days of her voyage out, and wonder why she could not be as well amused here at home as she had been on board ship. It

was nearly the same party. Flora was here, and there was an infinity of things strange to her to show Flora. Then Mr Spence, though he did not live at Blenheim, seemed as though he couldn't live away from it. Why should this society be less entertaining on shore than it had been at sea? It began to strike her that she missed Ensign Clifton.

Now an imperious young lady like Arabella, when she has once formed a wish, is most impatient for its gratification. She desired to see Clifton. She was hurt that he did not come; it was presumption in him to be able to stay away from her so long. She doubted whether his wound might not prove to have been a scratch which was fast healing, and whether his comrades might not have introduced him to many a belle quite capable of supplanting her. She grew angry, and had that exceedingly threatening symptom of tenderly yearning for the young man's visit in one fit, and in the next vindictively devising against him those penalties and pains wherewith lovers are not seldom tortured by their mistresses. Arabella was very proud and very politic, and so kept her feelings to herself, or, at least, intended to do so; but it is not certain that Flora was unsuspecting of them.

While matters went thus at Blenheim, Clifton's comrades, as has been said, left him one day to his own resources.

Here was the lover's opportunity, and he used it. When they were all off in the direction of the coast, he got on a horse and made for Blenheim. The negroes whom he met directed him fairly enough, but their remarks about the distance did not enlighten him. Some, of whom he inquired "How far?" answered, "Far enough, massa;" and others,

to the same query, said "Not so far, massa." However, he made his way thither somehow; and it may be inferred that his inner consciousness was very busy as he rode along, for he does not, as he was wont, expatiate much on the appearance of outward things. He found Blenheim to be a large rambling house, built principally of wood, well sheltered by trees, and surrounded by ground which there had been some attempt to make ornamental. The site commanded a splendid view, stretching down to the sea. There was an immense display of barbaric grandeur and profusion; and negroes and negresses of all ages swarmed about the place. Miss Chisholm's bright eyes sent forth an additional sparkle when she saw her visitor, who, however, could gather but small comfort from her looks; for he perceived that Mr Spence was in the room with her, established, as it would seem, on very easy terms. The Salmon ladies, also, were still there, and they all welcomed their fellow-voyager with cordiality. Mr Chisholm was away on business somewhere, and did not appear, but the ladies had plenty to say, and were full of a large ball which was to come off at Montego Bay in a few days, and to which the military were of course to be invited. Arabella was too grand to do anything for herself, but Miss Salmon was very busy in getting up a little millinery for her mother and herself, to be worn at the coming entertainment. Flora managed to get possession of Mr Clifton, and seemed much to rejoice in his proximity—a compliment for which he would have been more grateful had he not perceived Mr Spence at the same time monopolising Arabella. However, they found plenty to say about the past voyage and the coming ball, and the impression which the island had made on the

new-comers. By-and-by Miss Salmon took occasion, guardedly, to hint that the affair between Arabella and Spence seemed very like a settled thing. "He is always here," said Flora, "and, I fancy, has plenty of encouragement to come." Perhaps she read in her hearer's features the pang with which the poor lad received this information, and perhaps Flora thought that he deserved for his perversity to feel the pang; she, however, tried to divert him from the subject by sprightly conversation, and when he offered to move away, pinned him to his place, by making him wind silk for her. A superior strategist, however, delivered him from this snare; for Arabella came to them and said she would take Clifton and show him the blood-hounds, which, when on board ship, he had often expressed a desire to inspect; and she commanded Spence to come and take Clifton's place as Flora's silk-winder. If this had been intended expressly to favour Clifton's wishes it could not have been more craftily done, for Flora was in great fear of dogs generally, and could not possibly volunteer to be of the party to the kennel; so, with some chagrin, she accepted Mr Spence's services, and looked happy, and talked pleasantly, while there was bitterness in her heart. Meanwhile Clifton's heart beat a little more happily when he found himself walking forth with the lady of his affections. Arabella looked more charming than he had ever seen her. She was richly and becomingly dressed, and the escape from the confinement of the ship had told most favourably on her appearance and spirits. She did not hurry towards the dogs, but by the way called Clifton's attention to numerous things about the place which must be quite new to him. After a time she asked him if he

did not think Miss Salmon looking particularly well. Clifton said he thought she was looking very well, and that her spirits and wit seemed improved by her residence at Blenheim.

"She was in high glee a quarter of an hour ago, certainly," said Miss Chisholm; "but do you know, I don't think she'll be quite so merry just now."

"Indeed! I don't understand you."

"I daresay not. How blind men are! I mean that she won't thank me for taking you away from her."

"Me!"

"Yes, you. I have a suspicion that she thinks very highly of you."

"You are joking, Miss Chisholm."

"No — no joke at all; I have my reasons."

"Which are?"

"That she seems particularly anxious to promote a good understanding between Mr Spence and me."

"Oh! does she? but how does that prove——"

"You are too tiresome, I vow. How shall I say it? Perhaps she thinks I might stand in her way a little, so she would like to see me disposed of."

The ensign would have said something very serious then and there, only his heart gave such a great jump at this plain speaking that his tongue refused its office.

"I only tell you now," went on Arabella, "what may be passing in *her* mind. Of course it is all nonsense. I wouldn't for the world cross her path, and she ought to know it."

"But tell me, Miss Chisholm, for heaven's sake——"

"Well, I never knew anybody so absurd," said Arabella, laughing heartily. "I wish I

had never told you at all. Now do let us be reasonable, and talk of something else. There, now, what do you think of that horse? It is Wallenstein, and he won the Kingston Cup the year before last."

"His limbs are too fine for hard work," faltered the baffled ensign.

"Yes, so my papa says; but he can go like the wind under a light weight. Now tell me what you have been doing since I saw you last."

And Clifton gave as good an account as he could of himself, taking care to make it appear that he had eagerly seized the first opportunity that offered of presenting himself at Blenheim. When he said that he had been the day before at Higson's Gap, Arabella turned sharply towards him, and asked what he was doing there.

"Well, we went to see an old witch," said Clifton.

Arabella bent her bright eyes on him with a look that pierced through the young man. "Well," asked she, "and did you see the old witch, as you call her?"

"Oh yes," answered Clifton, feeling as if something were wrong and not knowing what. "Oh yes, we saw her."

Miss Chisholm became silent and thoughtful after this. They saw the dogs and other things of interest beside; but the lightness of the young lady's manner had quite left her. At last, when they were nearly at the house again, she stopped and said—

"Don't, Mr Clifton, ever speak

to anybody about that silly visit to Higson's Gap; I entreat you, I desire you."

Clifton said he would obey her, but he would like to mention that there were some rather extraordinary circumstances connected—

"No matter; nonsense; you are not to speak of it," said Arabella, peremptorily.

The remainder of his visit Clifton does not appear to have thought worth recording. He could not wait for dinner and the return of Sandy Chisholm, because there was no officer at Elsinore, and he felt that he ought to return. And so he rode away pleased, distracted, puzzled, a conflict of emotions racking his breast. It was delicious to reflect upon Arabella's looks and words when she owned the consciousness that she might appear attractive to him; but her coolness about the subject, and the way she turned it off, presented less agreeable food for thought. And then the fuss she made about the sorceress. What on earth could it mean? On one point, however, he felt rather relieved. If Arabella had really felt a preference for Spence, she could not possibly, strange and wilful though she was, have spoken with such *sang froid* about her relations with him. Many doubts and fears, with just enough of hope lurking about his heart to exercise it pitifully, kept him perplexed and helplessly love-sick. He could not disburden his mind nor draw comfort from anywhere. But the ball was not far off; at present he lived for that.

HEATHER.

Julius. Hi, good dog! Here! Come out of the sun, you four-legged idiot! Many years in my company, and still so little wisdom. Eh? What? "Only dogs and Englishmen walk in the sun." I have heard something to that effect before, but I forgive you. Sit here under my left arm. That is better. You are much to be pitied in that you cannot lean your back against the smooth trunk of a pine, and stretch out your legs before you. I too can lie on my stomach, if it please me, but you cannot for all your aspirations lean your back against a tree in comfort. Nor, though you cock your ear like a critic, do you care a jot for that faint sighing overhead, which even on this stillest of summer days is sweet to hear. Nor do those bright intelligent eyes perceive the beauty of heather. See how my right arm, half sunken, lies along this tuft, which is springy as the very finest smoking-room sofa, and beautiful—yes, by the immortality of humbug! more beautiful than the last creation of the last æsthetic upholsterer! But heather is healthy, irrepresible, and vulgar; it rebounds, it asserts itself; it is vulgar, vivid, and healthy as those reapers out beyond the wood, where the sun smites the wide field golden. Heather is vulgar, and probably its colour is *voyant* to the well-ordered eye. In truth, this England has become a strange place Aurelian, while you and I have been knocking about the world. Here lie you in the shade of the old pine-wood, and wag your tail—an incurable Philistine. Here lie I happy in the heather, and wag my jaw—a Philistine—but perchance to be cured and become oblivious of Ascalon.

And the strange thing is that we were wont to value ourselves on our taste. In this very spot have we reposed side by side, as now, and been well pleased with ourselves. Were I as once I was, I should hug myself with joy of that broad corn-land, all Danae to the sun, of the blue through the dark fir-tops: I should turn an idle eye to the hard whiteness of the road away on the right, where you delayed in the glare and ran the risk of madness, and then bless myself that I could feel the entire charm of a bed of heather spread in the shade for me. But now I am beset by doubts. What if heather be vulgar? It pushes, it rebounds, it asserts itself; it is decked with purple bells. It is not a sun-flower; it does not even wish to be a sun-flower; it is not wasted by one passionate sweet desire to become a sun-flower; it seems to be content with itself—content as a thriving grocer. Has Elfrida become a sun-flower? She used to be great fun. She was once a little girl, but now a young lady. She would not agree with the heather. Under the dark pine-trees her dark-green gown would be but a bit of the shadow, and she unseen save for the sunshine of her hair. O wheat, out in the happy field, where the reaper is singing or ought to be! Oh—but rhapsody is out of date. Elfrida has changed, O my dog, since the days when she was Elf, and rode the old horse bare-back, and played cricket with the boys, princess and witch of the schoolroom, elf of this wood, and utter fairy! She is a beauty now, and her gowns are as the dead leaves of the forest for number and colour, and her head is a little bowed on one side as the head of the lily,

and her face is a comely mystery. These are brave words, Aurelian. Yet there is none like her. What does she think of me? Were I a lover, thus idle in the sweet shade, I would solve the question by some pretty test, as thus: She loves me—she loves me not; she loves—no; she—but I perceive that you do not like me to pluck hairs from your tail; and yet I have called you friend these many years. Let the question remain unanswered. Or let us be wise, and know she loves us not.

“Sing little bird in the tree,
But not because my love loves me,
For she does no such thing;
Therefore, for your good pleasure, only
sing.”

Thank you. And now for luncheon. Now is the hour, when in eating-houses all the world over, there is clink of knives and small change, clatter of plates, and hum of talking and eating. Here there is no bustling waiter nor scent of roast joint, but only a crust of bread, an apple, and pure air. Were this my last crust you should share it. It is well, however, that you have no taste for apples. *He* would have tempted you with tea and a chop. Steady! Don't bolt your bread, and I will find a biscuit in my pocket. Be dignified, as becomes a traveller and one who has had losses. Have I lost something rare? I cannot say. But if I had not so longed to see the world, I might have gained something, when an Elf was tenant of this old wood. What? Enough? Why these extravagant demonstrations, this wagging of the tail, and, indeed, of the entire body? What do you see? Who is it? *Elfrida*! I did not think you would come out to-day.

Elfrida. Is it not beautiful?

Jul. Yes.—

“The valleys stand so thick with corn
that they do laugh and sing.”

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Elf.—

“Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean—

Tears from the depth of some divine despair,

Rise in the heart and gather to the eyes,
In looking on the happy autumn fields.”

Jul. It is scarce autumn yet. Let it be summer still; and let us laugh with the valleys. Consider that broad beauty in the sun.

Elf. Is it not exquisite, pathetic?

Jul. Is it?

Elf. Oh yes.

Jul. Not too bright, too garish?

Elf. Perhaps it is. I did not think that you would feel that.

Jul. Oh, not too bright for me. I like to sit in shadow and stare into the sun. But for you? I thought that you would resent the shining of the blue, the gleaming of the yellow corn, the cheerfulness of all things.

Elf. Are you laughing at me? I never know.

Jul. I laugh because you are here. It brings back other days. Oh, don't sigh. They were jolly, but none so jolly as this. Jolly! Let me say jocund.

Elf. I think it is all too bright. It hurts the eyes a little.

Jul. Are they weak, those eyes?

Elf. I think not.

Jul. I think not.

Elf. But I like soft colours best; don't you?

Jul. Tender grey skies, tender green grass, and tone.

Elf. Oh yes. That is good. That is like Lacave. It is only by studying the French painters that one can learn to love our grey-green English landscapes, to comprehend their infinite tenderness.

Jul. It is hard even for a French painter to comprehend the infinite.

Elf. Is it so hard? I wish you could see his pictures. I know so little, and I can't explain myself; but he is so clever, and it is all so

true. I should like you to know him, Julius.

Jul. Let it be so. I don't hate a Frenchman. What does he paint?

Elf. Oh, wonderful still things, all rest and brooding calm; a level grey-green sea; long, level, level sands all grey with wan sea-water; and far-off creeping mist and low grey sky.

Jul. Always that?

Elf. Yes, I think so; but with infinite variety in the monotone.

Jul. He must have a merry heart to keep him warm, or an endless cold in the head. Is he jocund, this painter?

Elf. Oh, Julius! He is always very still.

Jul. And grey? But I will learn to like the right things. Am I too old to learn? Will you teach me?

Elf. I can't teach anything, as you know, Julius. You must ask M. Lacave.

Jul.—

"The owl in the sunlight sat and said,
'I hate your vulgar blue and red;
Oh, better the grey of a wan twilight,
Or a black nocturne at the dead of night.'"

O M. Hibou,

A word with you—

Pray, how can you gain your potent sight?"

But in sober prose, sweet coz, I will to school again, and learn to love grey weather—a taste much to be desired in this old land of ours. Only let this day be holiday. Let us be happy to-day—happy as sun-burnt reapers in the field. I give the day to vulgar joy, for I am at home again, and the hour is fair. Joy is vulgar, is it not?

Elf. Oh no. Joy is good.

Jul. Good, and sweet, and sad, and so evil.

Elf. You are mocking me again, I think. But surely it is true that joy and sorrow are very near together, are one in some sort; are for

us so blended and intermingled, that we can no more sever one from another than the tuberoses from its scent.

Jul. I knew it. Evil is sad, and sad is sweet, and sweet is good. But no more gladness, which is scarce better than jollity. We must be sweetly, sadly, seriously joyous. It shall be so to-morrow. To-morrow I will begin to learn. To-morrow to school; to-morrow, to-morrow, to-morrow. But to-day! To-day I am so deeply, unutterably glad of the goodly earth, where angels might gather in the corn. Think of me as one who will do better, as one who has kept bad company for years: do you wag your tail at me, sir? I said bad company, Aurelian; nay, pat him not Elfrida, for he is a Philistine, and must be chastened. He is happy with a bone, sorry with a beating. To-morrow will I give him a bone and a beating at the same time, thus complicate his emotions, thus begin his education. Down, you fantastic pup!—Elfrida, this grove intoxicates me. It is not long since an Elf ran wild here, leaping in the heather, laughing to the air, darting through the shadows like a truant sunbeam fresh from heaven.

Elf. Do you remember those old days?

Jul. That is better. There is the old colour in your cheeks. Do you ever run now?

Elf. Sometimes, but not now. M. Lacave is painting me, and he likes me to be pale.

Jul. Would he were pale, very pale! You are too rare to fade, too—

Elf. Julius, what is the matter with the dog?

Jul. He has found a mare's nest. I know that air of preternatural sagacity. Lead on, Aurelian; we follow thee. Hush! Look here!

Scarce ten yards from where we sat! Is not this a day of enchantment?

Elf. Hush! Poor child, how sound he sleeps.

Jul. A little tramp of Italy, and a jolly little fellow.

Elf. He has crept in here from off the hard road of life. Don't wake him, Julius.

Jul. Not I. Do you think I would mar such slumber? Look how evenly the breath stirs the torn shirt on his breast, and how easily he lies, his knees a little bent, as if he would curl himself like some soft-coated animal warm in the heather! Did an eagle let him fall?

Elf. How beautiful is the soft olive face lying on the outstretched arm! and look at the lashes—how long they are on the cheek! Poor child! The path before him must be rough for those little feet. Poor child, poor child!

Jul. Not so poor neither. Is sleep like that worth nothing? See how he smiles, and the humorous wrinkle between the eyebrows, and the warm blood in the cheek. It is a child's cheek, round and soft; but the jaw is firm enough. Such a one moves well and cheerily among the chances of life. No fear for him. He was born in a happy hour.

Elf. How beautiful he is, astray from a poet's Italy, fragrant of the

wine-press, and eloquent of most delicate music!

Jul. Yet should he wake, that rustic bagpipe would be doubtless discordant. Sleep, little one, in good sweet Northern heather; sleep, little Ampelus, out of the swinging vines. Sleep, vagrant poem, not Ampelus; for now I bethink me, Elfrida, this is the very god of love.

Elf. Poor little child of the South.

Jul. Bad grandchild of the Southern sea, lovely and capricious, with malice in her smiles. Wake him not or tremble. Elves of the wood a-many have confessed his power. See how the dog trembles. Away!

Elf. Can we do nothing for him, Julius?

Jul. Nothing. But stay. There is a book of antique lore that says to those who chance to find Eros asleep, that, be they many or few, one or two, each must sing the god a song, and cross his palm with silver. I therefore in this upturned little brown hand place this half-crown. Do you take this, its fellow, and do likewise.

Elf. I shall never pay you, Julius.

Jul. You never can. So half the charm is done. Now, sit you here upon this tiny knoll. I will lie here on the other side. So our theme lies between us. Do you begin the song.

Elf. (sings)—Love lies asleep

Deep in the pleasant heather;
Wake him not lest ye weep
Through the long winter weather;
And sorrow bud again in spring,
With apple-blossoming,
And bloom in the garden close,
With blooming of the rose,
And ye, ere ye be old,
Die with the brief pale gold,
And when the leaves are shed,
Ye too lie dead.

Jul. No fear of waking this vagrant Love. How fast he sleeps. *Elf.* What utter weariness!
Jul. What splendid health!

Jul. (*sings*)—Oh, merry the day in the whispering wood,
 Where the boy Love lies sleeping;
 And clad in artistic ladyhood
 An Elf her watch is keeping!
 Oh, she was a queen of the elfin race,
 And flower of fairy land!
 The squirrel stood to look in her face,
 And the wild dove came to her hand;
 But her fairies have given a gift more fair
 Than any that elves or ladies wear,
 Unbought at any mart—
 A woman's heart.

Boys and maidens passing by,
 Be ye wise, and let Love lie!
 There's never a word than this more wise
 In all the old philosophies.

Hush your song this summer day,
 Lest he wake and bid you stay;
 Hush and haste away,
 Haste away,
 Away!

Elf. And we too must be going,
 for look how long the shadows of
 the reapers lie along the land. How
 sad so sweet a day must end!

Jul. And are not others coming
 better than this?

Elf. Who can say? Ah, yes!
 I will believe that they are coming.

Jul. That is wise, Elfrida. That
 is bravely said. Look how the
 sunlight comes like a conqueror,
 slanting through the dark firs!
 It touches the poor child's cheek,
 and you stoop to kiss the place.

That is well done. Did you see
 how he smiled and moved in sleep?
 He will wake soon with the even-
 ing light about him, to find wealth
 in his little brown hand, and in
 his heart the dream of a young
 queen's kiss.

Elf. Come. It is time to go
 home.

Jul. And after our many jour-
 neys by land and sea, is there still
 a home for us? Arise, Aurelian!
 come, good pup, and follow our
 gracious lady home.

CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE.

II. JOURNALISTS AND MAGAZINE-WRITERS.

PERHAPS the least satisfactory feature of contemporary journalism is the unpatriotic animus inspiring the articles of newspapers which have weight and a very considerable circulation. We confess that we have little sympathy with those who resent all hostile criticism of our foreign policy, because our relations with some foreign Power may seem to be tending to a rupture. It may be the legitimate office of a responsible opposition to save us by seasonable warnings from what they feel must be a national misfortune, and believe may be a national crime. Because they have but imperfect information on the points in dispute, is no sufficient reason for their refusing to express themselves upon evidence that may almost have the force of conviction for them. We can understand an honest patriot in such circumstances feeling impelled by his duty to deliver his conscience. But from that there is a very long way to systematically giving aid and comfort to the enemy; to exhausting all the resources of special pleading in constituting one's self his advocate and apologist in every conceivable contingency; finally, to labouring to persuade him that, happen what may, and should the quarrel come to be settled by the arbitrament of arms, he would be dealing, in any case, with a divided nation, and have a mass of sympathetic discontent upon his side. We do not say that these transcendently moral journals would not be quick to change their tone were war actually to break out; because we do not believe it. But by that time the mischief would have been done, and

the struggle precipitated by cosmopolitan philanthropists who had all along been pretending to deprecate it.

Never, in our recollection—we might almost say, never in our history—has anti-national agitation been carried to such unpatriotic lengths as during the course of the present troubles in the East. No doubt, the whole miserable business began most unfortunately for all parties, except, possibly, for the single aggressive State that had been deliberately working towards its long-determined ends. As Lord Derby remarked at the time—and the reflection needed small gifts of prophecy—the Bulgarian atrocities were likely to cost the Turks more dearly than many a lost battle. Russian emissaries had paved the way to them in their knowledge of certain phases of the English character; nor had the Russians reckoned in vain on the short-sighted extravagance of our emotional philanthropists. In spite of sensational exaggeration, the “atrocities” were atrocious enough; and the indignation that was vented from the platforms found an echo in the heart of England. Yet, setting aside altogether what the Turks had to urge in extenuation of the excesses of irregular troops they should never have been deluded into employing, it was evident to those among us who kept their heads, that others than the Turks might have to pay the penalty. We were bound in humanity to do what we could to take pledges and guarantees against their repetition; but they were no sufficient reason for breaking with the policy which had been dictated by self-preservation and the dread of

Russian ambition. Yet a not uninfluential section of the Liberal press, following the lead of the most impulsive of Liberal agitators, clamoured at once for an absolute revolution in the attitude that had recommended itself to the common-sense of our fathers. Because some wild Asiatic levies had been massacring and outraging some insurgent Christians, we were to welcome the Russians to the south of the Danube in their novel character of benevolent crusaders. The probabilities were, that the invading corps of half-civilised Sclavs, Tartars, and Cossacks, might cause much more misery than they were likely to remedy. But even supposing that they had come as the messengers of mercy, and behaved with a discipline beyond all reproach, it was certain they meant to remain where they were, as a menace to us. Whether the testament of Peter the Great was apocryphal or not, there was no gainsaying the candour of Nicholas, who was the very genius incarnate of modern Muscovite ambition. If the Russian success did not actually carry them to Constantinople, at least it would leave them intrenched in formidable outposts, whence they would threaten that city and our Eastern communications. At the best, the Russian victory that seemed a foregone conclusion, must end in a permanent increase to our national burdens. At the worst, it might well land us in the war which, at the moment of our writing, is still a possibility. That the Russians had views beyond Bulgarian emancipation was clearly shown by their attack on Asia Minor; for in those early days they held Turkish fighting power too cheap to attack the Ottomans all along their front, purely by way of a diversion. The Turks were holding the front lines of Anglo-Indian defence, where they were gallantly

standing to their guns along the Danube, and had rolled back the Russian advance from the mountain-ranges between Kars and Erzeroum. Yet at that critical moment, when there seemed almost a hope of Russia being checked, without the English empire being engaged or forced to intervene, a leading English weekly was writing despondently of the "evil news" that came steadily from the East to cast such heavy shadows on its pages. That seemed un-English and unpatriotic enough, though charity might set it down to short-sightedness, and to the innocence that will think no evil of anybody—of anybody, at all events, who makes profession of Christianity. The Russians were still in their rôles of emancipators; they had as yet had no opportunity, for the best of reasons, of showing their notions of civilisation, and their clemency in the treatment of women and non-combatants; they had had no time to think of "rearrangement of territory" while they held their positions on the tenor of help from the Roumanians. Later, and subsequently to the Treaty of San Stefano, they had dropped the mask. At the Congress of Berlin they were brought face to face with England; and England was acknowledged by the common consent of Continental nations as the champion of treaties and the common interests. The 'Débats' and the 'Temps' held precisely the same tone as the 'Union,' the 'Soléil,' and the 'Republique Française.' The 'Kölnische Zeitung' and the 'Allgemeine Zeitung' were in agreement with the 'Post' and the 'Neue Freie Presse.' We may believe that our foreign friends were not altogether unwilling that we should pull the chestnuts out of the fire for them; but be that as it may, it was universally recognised that the triumph of international right depended upon strengthening the

hands of our Ministers. When the only discordant notes were sounded from the London offices of one or two of the Liberal organs of "conscientious" English opinion, it was hardly a time for debating-society sophistries. Russia had ceased to care to conceal her intentions; or rather she had been forced to show her hand in the terms she dictated in the insolvency of victory. Her generals and administrative organisers, with most outspoken cynicism, had approved or exaggerated the extortionate claims of the San Stefano Treaty. If Russia had reluctantly consented to modify the San Stefano conditions at Berlin, her acts were in contradiction of those solemn engagements. Yet English journals still served their party by professing to cling blindly to their original belief. From the language of Russian generals, intoxicated with sudden success—from the consistent energy of the Russian War Office, massing fresh troops in the territory they had undertaken to evacuate—there were men of intelligence who insisted upon appealing back to the words of the Russians when soberly plotting. They still took Prince Gortschakoff and General Ignatieff *au sérieux* in their old and favourite Muscovite part of Tartuffe, while ignoring Prince Dondoukoff-Korsakoff and General Scoboleff, who were swaggering as Bombastes Furiosos. The best we can say of them is, that had they shown themselves as incompetent in their judgments on things in general as in that most momentous and dangerous Eastern Question, they would never have attained the influential position which has made it worth the while of our enemies to court their alliance.

Their only conceivable apology, if apology it can be called, is that they have been working for their political friends according to their peculiar lights, and following the

lead of their most prominent leaders. The Conservatives are in office; and if the Liberals were to return to power with a strong working majority, Ministers must be discredited in the eyes of the nation. It is conceivable that a Cabinet may blunder almost stupidly. The extraordinary timidity with which that of Mr Gladstone had alienated the Affghan Ameer, by rejecting his overtures and refusing him some contingent security against Russian aggression, is an unhappy case in point. But it seemed incredible that a group of eminent English statesmen of honourable antecedents, Conservatives though they might be, should have committed themselves *en masse* to a systematic conspiracy, as much against their personal honour as the grave interests they had in charge. Yet that is the indictment which has been practically brought against them, and they have been loaded with improbable and indiscriminate abuse in the well-founded expectation that some of it might bespatter them. Party spirit has never been working more strenuously on the maxim of giving a dog an ill name and hanging him. If Ministers spoke out manfully, they were blustering; if they saw reason to be discreetly reserved, they were shuffling intriguers and time-servers; when they asked for a war-vote, they were working in advance for the failure of the coming congress of peacemakers—although, as what happened at Berlin conclusively demonstrated, had England not persuaded men of her readiness for war, we should have had even less of moral support from the German Chancellor, and obtained no shadow of concessions from Russia. Repeatedly, when time has made disclosures permissible, the explanations have been more than satisfactory to candid minds. Yet we

have never once had an honest admission to that effect; and the special pleaders have either slightly shifted their ground, or continued their abuse upon vague generalities. The Cabinet would have fared even worse had not the Premier served as a lightning-conductor; the favourite assumption being that his colleagues must be fools and dupes. In other words, that some of the ablest and most experienced and most highly placed of English politicians are content to place their honour in the hands of a "charlatan," and stake the chances of a brilliant political future on the caprices and surprises of a "feather-brained adventurer." For "charlatan" and "feather-brained adventurer" are the characters in which it pleases Lord Beaconsfield's detractors to represent him. Truly it may be said of him, that a prophet has no honour in his own country. It is nothing that foreign Liberals have recognised him as the worthy representative of the generous strength of England—as the champion of essentially liberal ideas against the autocratic absolutism of great military empires. It was nothing that his journey to Berlin was made a significant triumphal progress, when crowds of phlegmatic Flemings and Germans came cheering the veteran statesman, with few dissentient voices. It is nothing that he has the confidence of his Royal Mistress, who is perhaps as nearly concerned as most people in the stability of her throne and the welfare of her subjects, and whose political capacity and knowledge of affairs have been amply demonstrated in the 'Life of the Prince Consort.' It is nothing, of course, that after surmounting almost unprecedented obstacles and prejudices, he has the confidence of the great party who hold the heaviest stakes in the

country. But it is much that he has been steadily swaying to his side the masses who once pinned their faith on Mr Gladstone, and that the nation at large is disposed to judge him more generously, and deal tenderly with any mistakes he may have made, in consideration of the difficulties with which he has been contending. We are no indiscriminate admirers of Lord Beaconsfield; but in the course of history we remember no one who has been treated with more deliberate malevolence and injustice. We have understood it to be the boast of the British constitution, that it offered the freest openings to men who are *parvenus* in the best sense of the word. It has been Mr Disraeli's misfortune to awaken fresh jealousies and animosities at each step he has made in advance. He has distinguished himself as a writer, as a debater, as an orator, as a statesman,—but, above all, as the most patient and successful of party leaders. He has held together the party he has disciplined, and made of a despised minority the majority he commands; and that is the sin that will never be forgiven him. Lord Beaconsfield has his faults, and they must have occasionally betrayed him into error. Reckless and romantic as we are told he is in his speech, we do not remember his making any claim to infallibility. But if we take him on the estimates of his inveterate detractors, there seldom was such a monster of moral perversity; and we can only marvel at the transcendent powers which have made him the foremost statesman of England, in spite of such transparent chicanery. If he speaks with apparent frankness, he is discredited beforehand, since it is notorious that there is nothing he detests like the truth. If he says nothing, it is the silence of the conspirator. If he winds up a

brilliant speech with a soul-stirring peroration that would have been reprinted in all the elocution books had it fallen from the lips of Lord Chatham, it is merely a bouquet of the Premier's fireworks. A seemingly far-sighted stroke of policy is a dangerous development of his weakness for surprises. He is abused simultaneously for abstention as for meddling; and is made personally responsible for each dispensation of Providence, from the depreciation of the Indian rupee to the lowering of agricultural wages.

Lord Beaconsfield serves as a lightning-conductor for his Cabinet. But other public men in their degrees have equally hard measure dealt out to them. Sir Henry Elliot has been out of the storm since he shifted his quarters from Constantinople to the comparative obscurity of Vienna. But Sir Henry Layard, who stepped into his place, has had to bear the brunt of the merciless pelting. It is a strange coincidence, to say the least of it, that our agents in the East, from the highest to the lowest, and whether originally appointed by Liberals or Conservatives, have proved themselves equally unworthy of credit. They can hardly have sold themselves to the Turks, for the Turks have never had money to buy them. We can only suppose them to have been demoralised by the taint of Mohammedan air, and the disreputable company they have been keeping. As a matter of fact, their evidence, *ex officio*, goes for nothing. A passing traveller, who knows as little of the habits of the country as of its language, who sees through the eyes and hears with the ears of a dragoman that has taken the measure of his employer, pens a letter to a sympathetic paper, with a piece of startling intelligence that makes the blood run cold. Forthwith it is

made the text for a scathing leader, and the editor stands committed to the assertion of his informant. We can understand that he prints with a civil sneer the explanations of the embassy in Bryanston Square. But in due time comes the contradiction from the English consul, who has spent half a life in those borderlands of barbarism. The consul has been at the pains to make searching inquiries, and can pronounce the whole story to be a fable. Possibly his communication may be printed, since it is sure, sooner or later, to find publicity somewhere. And the philanthropical editor accepts it as confirming his conviction that the philo-Ottomanism of these officials is beyond belief. So it was when Mr Fawcett undertook a mission into Thessaly to inquire into the melancholy fate of one of the 'Times' correspondents. A universally-respected consul-general being sent on such a mission at all, was only the farcical epilogue to a grim tragedy. So with Mr Fawcett and the other delegates of the impartial foreign Powers appointed to inquire into the atrocities in the Rhodope. We were informed that biassed judges were examining perjured witnesses. The wretched Turkish women who told of diabolical outrages with the unmistakable truth of depression following upon suffering, simple peasants as they seemed, were in reality incomparable actresses. Set the agitation over the Bulgarian atrocities side by side with the indifference to the Rhodope horrors, and say whether there has even been a show of common fairness. We can understand a Russian journalist making the best of a bad cause, and patriotically defending his countrymen at any cost from the delicate impeachment of being half-reclaimed barbarians. We should have said some time ago that it was inconceiv-

able that English journalists could have held themselves so hard bound by their own precipitate assumptions, or had their judgments so warped by the spirit of party, as to reject the most direct and irresistible evidence, and turn a deaf ear to the promptings of duty and humanity. It seems a light thing by comparison that they have been systematically unjust to meritorious and conscientious public servants, doing their best to injure them in their feelings and disqualify them for honourable careers. But it is certain that, for simply speaking the truth and doing their duty in the face of a storm of obloquy, men like Sir Henry Layard and Mr Fawcett must, in common consistency, be removed from the public service, should certain of the philosophical Liberals ever return to power.

Yet these independently international journals are human and humanitarian before anything. They charge themselves with the general interests of mankind, leaving those of England to take care of themselves. Nothing more surely excites their indignant eloquence than any language that reminds us of our former glories: they regard a hint of our imperial interests as synonymous with Chauvinism of the wildest type; and were a Tyræus to animate us to deeds of arms, he would have a hard time at the hands of these critics. They write us as if we were a nation of reckless filibusters, sent for its sins into a world of Quakers and saints. To hear them, one might imagine that England armed to the teeth, with a universal conscription and her inexhaustible resources, was meditating a new crusade against the legitimate aspirations of peace-loving Russia. If we take the simplest precaution in self-defence, we give provocation to some well-meaning neighbour. Learned jurists prove

to demonstration that in our lightest actions we are infringing the treaties which it is the prerogative of other nations to tear up, so soon as opportunity conspires with convenience. With an adroitness which, in a sense, is highly creditable to them, they invent for sensitive foreigners the grievances they are bound to resent. Americans, embarrassed over the surplus compensation for the Alabama claims, have their warm sympathies in protesting against the liberality of the Canadian Fisheries award. The French are warned that we presumed on their misfortunes when, declining a foothold on the shores of Syria, we rented an outlying island from the Porte; and the Italians are reminded that we are trifling with their notorious self-abnegation, when we spare Egypt a finance minister without praying them to provide him with a colleague. Agitation originating in England furnishes the strongest of arguments to Opposition journals abroad, when they do their best to make mischief between our Government and the Cabinets who are persuaded that we are giving them no cause of offence. Nor does the spirit of faction stop short even there. It goes the length of encouraging sedition within our own dominions, at the very moment when it loudly proclaims that the safety of the empire is being endangered. A weekly journal to which we have made repeated allusion, in deprecating our advance across the frontier of Affghanistan, warned us solemnly that any check to our army would be the signal for a general revolt among our feudatories. Had we really held India by so frail a tenure, it was surely a time for patriotism to be silent. As a matter of fact, the suggestion was absolutely groundless. From Kashmir and the Punjab down to

the Deccan, our feudatories have given substantial guarantees for their loyalty by emulously placing their forces at our disposal; and we are assured by Anglo-Indian officials, fresh from a residence in these districts, that if there has been discontent among the contingents of Sindiah or of Holkar, nothing would stifle it more effectually than accepting their services for the war. The provocation of such a danger, by way of bolstering an argument, forcibly illustrates the recklessness of those who, as the 'Débats' remarks, at the moment of our writing, *apropos* to the Affghan Committee, are entering upon a second campaign against their country in alliance with the Russian statesmen and scribes.

Setting party before patriotism is unfortunately nothing new, although not even in the struggle for existence with Napoleon was it carried to such scandalous length as of late. What is more of a novelty in the contemporary press is the tone of what are styled the society journals. We fancy that the germ of the idea may be traced to 'The Owl,' a paper which had a brilliant ephemeral existence through "the seasons" of a good many years back. And 'The Owl' was really a journal of society. Its sparkling articles were by witty men and women, who mixed evening after evening in the circles they professed to write for. They were sarcastic and satirical of course, but they carefully shunned personalities. Those articles by Mrs N., or Mr L., were well worth reading for their merit: the clever writers had won their spurs long before, and were welcomed and admired in the world they frequented. They really picked up their scraps of social intelligence in the drawing-room or at the dinner-table; and if a mistake were made, there was no great harm done. Editors and contri-

butors carried into their columns the good taste and delicate feelings which guided them in their private life. They succeeded in being lively and entertaining, but they scrupulously avoided giving pain; and while they held those who lived in public to be legitimate game, they invariably respected private individuals. We wish we could say as much for their successors. To many of them nothing is sacred as nothing is secret. Unlucky men or women who have the misfortune to have a name, find themselves paraded some fine morning for the entertainment of the curious public. Possibly the first intimation of their unwelcome notoriety comes from an advertisement, in letters a couple of inches long, flaunting them full in the face from a staring poster on a railway stall. Imagine the horror of that sudden shock to a man of reserved habits and keen susceptibilities. He would not stand for an election to save his life; in his desire to escape even a passing notice, he is as modestly unobtrusive in his dress as in his manners: and here he is being made a nine days' talk in the clubs and the railway carriages; while even without being made the subject of a portrait and biographical sketch, a paragraph may sting him or do him irreparable injury. Tom, Dick, and Harry have the satisfaction of learning that he has arranged a marriage with the Hon. Miss So-and-so. There is just so much of truth in it, that he has long been hovering round that fascinating young woman, with intentions that have been daily growing more serious, when that premature announcement scared him for good and all, and possibly spoiled the lifelong happiness of a loving couple. Always shamefaced in the presence of the enchantress, he now is ready to shrink into himself at the faintest

rustle of the skirts of her garment ; and he retires to the seclusion of his country-seat, or takes shipping for the uttermost parts of the earth. While another gentleman is letting his mansion for reasons that are entirely satisfactory to himself, or possibly for a simple caprice, straightway we hear that he has outrun the constable, and that his creditors are in full cry at his heels. A lady of rank and reputation who has a weakness for a rubber, and who was tempted in an evil hour to be playfully initiated into the mysteries of *baccarat*, learns that her lord will no longer be responsible for her gambling debts, and that the family diamonds are gone to Mr Attenborough's. Another fair one, with a foible for private theatricals, figures as the heroine of some rather ambiguous adventure, with allusions that make her identity unmistakable to the initiated. The stories may be true, false, or exaggerated. Let them be false in the main, if there be a shadow of truth in them, denial or explanation only insures their circulation, so that the victim of the indiscretion is practically helpless. It may be said that offences against decency and public morals deserve to be exposed, and that society is improved thereby. We cannot assent to that for a moment, and everything, at all events, is in the manner of doing it. We have quite enough of the washing of our linen in the law courts—whose reports, by the way, might often be curtailed, in ordinary consideration for modest readers.

At present there are at least half-a-dozen tolerably widely read journals of the kind we are describing. Each of them devotes some half-dozen of pages to paragraphs whose staple is gossip or scandal. We can conceive the rush and the rivalry among them to get on for a "good thing." There can be no

time to verify doubtful facts, for while you are inquiring, a less conscientious contemporary may get the start of you. If you know next to nothing of a possible sensation, at least make matters safe in the meantime by the dark hint that may be developed in "our next." You have taken the preliminary step to register your discovery, and though you may be stumbling over a mare's nest, you are secure against an action for libel. Not that an action for libel is always an unmixed evil. On the contrary, it may be an excellent advertisement, though an expensive one ; especially should the prosecutor's general antecedents be indifferent, even if he cast you for damages in this particular instance. Sometimes, no doubt, a rascal gets his deserts. And yet, when his secret sins are set before him by half-a-dozen bitter and lively pens ; when he is held up to social reprobation in half-a-dozen of most unlovely aspects—we feel some such pity for him as we should have felt for the wretch who had been flogged through the public streets after passing the morning in the pillory.

Naturally nothing sells these papers better than flying at exalted game. They are never more nobly and loyally outspoken than in lecturing some royal personage as to some supposed dereliction of duty ; although we might honour them more for the courage of their patriotism, were there such things as English *lettres de cachet*, or if we had retained a Star-Chamber among our time-honoured institutions. And if there really are holes to be picked in the robes of royalty, we must remember that it may be done with comparative impunity. A prince may know that he is being maligned ; that very innocent actions are being foully misconstrued ; that the evidence hinted at as existing

against him, would not bear the most cursory examination. But he can hardly condescend to put himself on his defence in the public prints, still less to seek redress in the law courts. And what would be amusing, if it were not irritating, in some of these papers in particular, is the airs of omniscience affected by their contributors. The editors of most are pretty well known; and some of those editors, on general topics, have very fair means of information. One or two of them are more or less in society, or may be supposed to be familiar with men who are. But each and all, from the best known to the most obscure, have their political and social correspondents, who are everywhere behind the scenes. You might fancy that Ministers babbled State secrets over their claret, choosing their intimates and confidants among the gossiping reporters; or that their private secretaries and the confidential heads of their departments were one and all in the pay of the scandal-mongering press. The most delicate diplomatic negotiations get wind at once; and we learn everything beforehand as to military preparations from spies who must be suborned at Woolwich and in the War Departments. While, as for dinners and evening parties, each of the journals has its delegate who is the darling of the most exalted and fastidious society. How Philaethes, or 'Brin de Paille,' manages, as he must do, to distribute himself in a score of places simultaneously, is a mystery that can only be explained by his intimate relations with the spirits. And the tables and mirrors of his sitting-room should be a sight to see, embellished as they must be with the scented notes and autographs of the very grandest *seigneurs* and the greatest dames.

That these gentlemen are hand-

in-glove with the most exclusive of the exclusives, is plain enough on their own showing. When they ask you to walk with them into White's or the Marlborough—and those haunts of the fashionables are their familiar resorts—they present you to the *habitués* by their Christian names, and always, if it may be, by a friendly abbreviation. It is professional "form" to talk of Fred This and Billy That; and we often please ourselves by picturing the faces of the said Fred or Billy, priding himself on a frigidity of manner warranted to ice a whole roomful of strangers, were he to be button-holed in Pall Mall by his anonymous allies and affectionately addressed by his queerly-suited *sobriquet*. Of course, when a great light of the turf, the clubs, or the hunting-field goes out in darkness, unanimous is the wail raised over his departure. Philaethes, and all the rest of his brotherhood, have to bemoan the loss of a comrade and boon companion. It is the story of Mr Micawber and David Copperfield over again; you would fancy that every man of them had been the chosen crony of the departed old gentleman from the days of his boyhood. They are full of excellent stories, showing the goodness of his heart and the elasticity of his conscience; they knew to a sovereign or a ten-pound note how nicely he had made his calculations as to ruining himself; and to tell the truth, they are by no means chary as to making vicarious confession of the follies of their friend. It can matter but little to him, though it may be anything but pleasant for his relations. But hereafter, each man who cuts a figure in society must count, when his time shall come at last, on pointing a profusion of humorous morals and adorning a variety of extravagant tales.

As to the biographical sketches of living ladies and gentlemen which come out in serial form, we do not so greatly object to them. For this reason, that in most instances they err on the kindly side, and do their subjects something more than justice. If you prevail on a celebrity to let you interview him "at home," you give a pledge tacitly or in words that you propose to treat him considerately. These catalogues of his personal surroundings, the trophies of arms on his walls, the favourite volumes on the book-shelves, the cat on the hearth-rug, and the letter-weight on the writing-table, can only be drawn up from personal inspection. We know that body-servants are occasionally corruptible, and that elderly housekeepers are susceptible to flattery. But as a rule, we imagine that the accomplished interviewer makes his entry by the front door, and is courteously welcomed by his victim. A public man, who knows he must be painted, feels he may as well choose his own attitude, and have something to say to the mixing of the colours. We have often imagined what we should do in such circumstances had the achievements of a checkered career invited the blaze of publicity. We should make an appointment with an illustrious artist for the luncheon-hour; we should send the snuggest of carriages to the station if we chanced to live in the country; and we should put the servants into grand livery. It would be hard indeed if we found our friend a teetotaller, and strange, considering his calling. And by the help of our old sherry and velvety claret, it would be odd if he did not take us for all that was admirable by the time, with a winning touch on the arm, we led him aside into the "snuggery," and settled him with a Havannah in an easy-chair. Then over the fragrant

Mocha we should abandon ourselves to the reminiscences that should kindle him with a sympathetic glow. We should modestly note our early triumphs, and direct attention to the turning-points of a brilliant career. We should incidentally anticipate the insinuations of our enemies, and perhaps touch delicately and playfully on those weaknesses which it would be difficult altogether to ignore. Then, if we were fortunate enough to be the master of an historic mansion, or of some artistically-decorated villa in the northern suburbs, we should dazzle our mellowed guest with the inspection of its apartments and curiosities; and having led him away to take leave of the ladies of the family, and handed him into the carriage with heartiness tempered by a gentle regret, we should be content to wait the result with confidence. We should hope that our grateful visitor would take advantage of the inspiration of our claret and *chasse-café* to dash off his study while his mind was full of us; and we should picture him in his writing den, or at the neighbouring railway hotel, busy between his memory and metallic note-book.

The subjects of the caricatured portraits, which are the conspicuous attraction of some of those weeklies, scarcely come so happily off as a rule. There are men who lend themselves so obviously to artistic satire, that the meanest talent can hardly miss the mark. They remind one of the story of the insulted fairy at the christening. Her sisters have bestowed on the fortunate child most of the worldly gifts that could be desired for it. Among other things, it has a set of features that may be either handsome or redeemed from ugliness in after-life by the expression which stamps them with genius or dignity. But then malevolence has willed it that

they may be easily hit off, and wedded with associations that may be ludicrous or even degrading. The nose and legs of Lord Brougham made him a standing godsend to the comic papers, till he withdrew, in the fulness of years and fame to the Riviera. And then the mantle that his lordship let fall settled permanently on the shoulders of Mr Disraeli. It was only in keeping, by the way, that the Radical lampooners should not hold their hands, but exercise pen and pencil, with stale monotony, when his lordship went to Berlin, with Europe looking on, not as the chief of a party, but as the guardian of England. When we laugh in season, and keep the laugh to ourselves, there is little harm done, though feelings may suffer. But it does seem unfair on some innocent private gentleman, to see the distorted image of the presentment he has been studying in his looking-glass, figuring in the windows of all the advertising news-agents, and gibbeted on the lamp-posts at the corners of the thoroughfares. If he be philosophic enough not to care much for himself, his female connections will be scarcely so indifferent. The slight and graceful figure is shown as meagre, to lankiness; and the stout gentleman who, in spite of appearances, has been fretting over his increasing corpulence, is horrified by the sight of the too solid spectre of what he may come to be in a few years hence. The *bon vivant*, who dreads that the deepening tints on his nose may be traced to his connoisseurship in curious vintages, sees himself branded in the eyes of the public as the incarnation of a dismounted Bacchus without the vine-leaves; while it is borne home upon the middle-aged Adonis that the happy days of his *bonnes fortunes* are departing. Of course there is caricature that is far

more subtle; that can laugh good-humouredly, or sting maliciously with the force of an unexpected betrayal or a revelation, when it interprets character by insinuating or accentuating some half-concealed *trait* of most significant expression. With our easy *insouciance* as to the sorrows of our neighbours, we are willing enough to condone the cruelty for the wit; but, unfortunately, the wit is become rarer than we could wish it to be. The cleverest master of the manner has ceased to satirise, and his imitators are less of satirists than unflattering portrait-painters.

There is another class of likenesses that catch the public eye, addressing themselves to the fashionable proclivities of prowlers on the outskirts of society, and to the mixed multitude of the mob that admires beauty and notoriety where it finds them. We do not know how many of the "Queens of Society," the "Sultanas of the *salons*," or the "Houris of the Garden Parties," may have been prevailed upon actually to sit for their portraits. But one thing to be said is, that the brief biographical sketches which illustrate the portraits are usually written in all honour. The lady's descent, if she can boast any; her connections and her husband's connections, with some high-flown compliments on her looks and her social charms, sum up the short and gratifying notice.

There is one social power even greater than that of beauty, since too often it can purchase beauty at its will, and that is Mammon. If a man means to make his way in politics, he must have something more than a handsome competency. Phineas Finns are phenomena, though Mr Trollope's clever couple of novels are of no very ancient date; and an Edmund Burke would have even harder measure dealt out

to him, now that pocket-boroughs are wellnigh exploded. People who have to shine in any way, unless they fall back upon confirmed celibacy, live in their bachelor tubs like cynics, and trust to their conversational gifts for social currency, must have something more than even a good-going income. The battle of life is to the strong, who have indefinite resources—who thrive, like the gambler, by bold speculation—or who are content to trade on their expectations, and commit those who should inherit from them to Providence. In fact, almost everybody who is socially ambitious goes in for gambling nowadays, in one shape or another, not always excepting the fortunate few who have hereditary incomes that may be called colossal. Hence the enormous increase within the last few years in the sworn brokers of the city of London; hence the extraordinary success of the foreign loans, which appealed to the cupidity of the many who were doomed to be their victims; hence the shoals of joint-stock companies, launched with a flush of credit or flood of cheap money, to be stranded and hopelessly shipwrecked on the ebb of the next neap tide; and hence the importance assumed by our “city articles,” and the profusion of the financial organs that must have some sort of circulation. When a man has been trading far beyond his means, or has risked a dangerous proportion of them in venturesome speculations, he becomes feverishly alive to the fluctuations of the stock markets, and nervously credulous of reports as to the shiftings of its currents. The empire may have staked its credit on an Affghan war; the Ministry may be committed to delicate negotiations which are visibly passing beyond our control, and may end in an ultimatum and a declaration of hos-

tilities. The finance-dabbling Galio cares for none of these things, save in so far as they may affect consols, and bring down the price of Russians. If he has gone in seriously for “bearing” against next settling-day, he would illuminate in the lightness of his spirits for the national humiliation which threw the markets into a panic. Once accepting him for what he is, we can hardly blame him: a man should have the patriotic self-abnegation of a Curtius or a Regulus to accept ruin and annihilation with a cheerful heart; and if he is backing the Russians to humble England in the long-run, he must necessarily triumph in his heart at a Russian victory. *Il va sans dire* that he lends his money in any conceivable quarter upon tempting interest if he fancies the security, just as honest African traders pass their rifles and powder among the tribes that are making preparations to massacre our colonists. And it follows, as a matter of course, that he consults financial publicists as so many oracles; unless, indeed, he is levian enough to be behind the scenes, and to take a lead in one of those formidable “syndicates” which combine to “rig” the markets, and to subsidise the journals that conspire with them.

If investors knew more of city editors, they would undoubtedly spare themselves considerable worry; although the city editor, whoever he may be, must secure an influence which is invariably very sensible, and which increases in times of crisis and panic. Innocent outsiders, living peaceably in the provinces, and spinster ladies, retired officers, busy clergymen, and doctors who have little thought for anything beyond their professions, are ready to concede him the infallibility which it is a part of his duties to assume. He gives his utterances with an

authority which seems divine or diabolical, according as it favours their investments or injures them. Should he condescend to enter into explanations, he invokes facts or figures to back his conclusions. He always seems terse and lucid, pitilessly logical, and business-like. They take him naturally for what he insinuates himself to be—an omniscient financial critic, the centre of a network of nervous intelligences which stretch their feelers to the confines of the money-getting world. Or, putting it more prosaically, they believe him to be more or less in relation with everybody in the city, from the greatest of the Hebrew capitalists and the governor of the bank, down to the jackals of the promoters of the latest investment trust. He is believed to have spies where he has not friends, with the means of informing himself as to all that goes on. As a matter of fact, there are editors and editors. Not a few of them are extremely well informed as to the monetary matters they report and discuss. They make influential and useful acquaintances on the strength of timely good offices mutually rendered. In spite of strong temptations to the contrary, arising out of difficult and compromising relations, they keep their honesty intact, and may be trusted so far as their lights go. But after all, and at the best, they may be little shrewder than their neighbours, and nearly as liable to be mistaken or to mislead. They can only comment or advise to the best of their limited judgment. And moreover, the city editor, like the hard-working stockbroker, is seldom the man to go to for a far-sighted opinion. It is in the very nature of his occupation that he does his thinking from day to day, and rather rests on the immediate turns of the markets than on the far-reach-

ing influences which are likely to govern them.

On the other hand, there are city writers, and on important journals too, who have been pitchforked into their places rather than deliberately selected for them. They have those qualities of a methodical clerk, which are useful so far, and indeed indispensable. For the city editor should be a man of indefatigable industry and inexhaustible patience: ever at his post during business hours, and always ready, at a moment's notice, to enter intelligently into elaborate calculations, and to audit long columns of figures. He has recommended himself to his employers by regularity and trustworthiness. He may have been the useful right-hand man of a former chief in the city department. When that chief is removed for any reason, it is no easy matter to fill his place. The managers of the paper cast about for a successor; but the writers of honesty and ability, who have been regularly bred to the vocation, for the most part are already retained elsewhere. So the useful factotum, who has been seated for the time in the editorial chair, stays on in it doing its duties from day to day, till the appointment in chief is practically confirmed to him. Probably he is honest in intention and in act, which is much. But he is merely a machine after all, and has no capacity for brain-work. He knows less of foreign affairs than an average third secretary of legation, and is as likely to be misled as anybody by the flying rumours of the day. He has no resources of general information, and is quite incapable of estimating the real security of a foreign loan or the prospects of some South American railway. If he be conscious of his own deficiencies, and is impelled to supply them some-

how, he is exposed to becoming the dupe and complacent tool of crafty financiers of superior intelligence. Knowing little, it is only natural that he should try to appear as universally well informed as may be. Thus "he has every reason to believe that powerful influences are at work for placing Patagonian credit on a more satisfactory footing." "There has been a deal of sound buying in the last few days; and it is understood that a powerful syndicate has been formed to come to a permanent arrangement with the Government of the Republic." "It is rumoured that an English financier of note has entered on a seven years' engagement with the President and his ministers." The fact being, that the oracle has been "earwigged" by the agent of a group of bulls, who are bound to "rig" the market and raise it if they can, that they may unload their superfluity of worthless "Patagonians" on the credulous investing public. The operation performed with more or less success, it is found that the Patagonian Government is more impenitently reckless than ever, and the stocks relapse more rapidly than they had risen. Should no plausible explanation be forthcoming, the disappointment of the expectations is quietly ignored; and the editor goes on writing oracularly as before, on other subjects on which his authority is equally reliable.

It happens sometimes that the city editor betrays his trust, accepting pecuniary *pots de vin* and bribes in paid-up shares, and standing in with designing conspirators. Considering his opportunities and the improbability of detection so long as times are good and speculation lively, it is creditable on the whole that such scoundrels are so rare. When money is plentiful and credit inflated, and companies

of all kinds are being floated wholesale, the city editor reminds us of Clive in the treasury of Moorsheda-bad; and if he keeps his hands from picking and stealing, we may imagine him astonished at his own virtue and moderation. For it must be avowed that if he accepted the *honoraria* that are pressed upon him, he would sin—if sin it were—in highly respectable company. Some of the best names in the city have been dragged through the mire when the proceedings of certain eminent boards have at length been brought to light by their difficulties; noblemen and gentlemen coming out of the west have been seen to change their code of morality altogether when they took to trading to the east of the Cannon Street Station; and as for "promotion," it has come to be a synonym for everything that is shady, disreputable, or criminal. In the happy times, when so many were rich, and everybody was hasting to be richer; when superabundant savings were ready to overflow into every scheme that was broached under decent auspices; when rival banks were emulously generous of accommodation to customers who were perpetually turning over their capital; when any scheme that ingenuity could suggest was sure to go to some sort of premium, and a letter of allotment was tantamount to a bank-note or a cheque,—then the shrewd city writer was the centre of very general interest. It was the object of the professional promoter to "square" him if possible; and success in the experiment was one of the considerations which the promoter offered for the money that was pressed upon him. Nothing proved it more than the subsidies those gentlemen continued to receive for their very dubious services, even after their names had been so thoroughly blown upon that

if they had been published in the seductive prospectuses they composed, they would have scared away confidence instead of attracting it. But the city editor might pride himself on being a man of the world, and show a generous toleration for the tricks of finance. He was flattered by the respect paid to his position and opinions, by the successful millionaire who was building mansions in South Kensington, and castles in the country, and filling them with titled and avaricious guests. It was no bad thing to be the "friend of the house," and have the run of a table where one met the most fashionable of company over the best of wines and unexceptionable cookery. Nothing could be more than natural that he should listen pleasantly to the easy confidences of his host in the snug smoking-room towards the small hours. He was genially disposed towards any scheme in those days when almost everything seemed to succeed. When you were paying fifteen or twenty per cent, the biggest commission was a comparative bagatelle. When he wrote of a prospectus in the way of business, he wrote as he had been impressed in the moments of *abandon*. His judgment must be satisfied, of course—that was a *sine quâ non*: but if all was fair and above board, where was the harm if he accepted some shares, and even consented to take a seat among the benefactors of their species? Conscience was salved or silenced; and from the accepting of shares to the taking a cheque on occasion, the step was a short one. Once upon the slope that led to Avernus, the descent was swift and easy. He owed a duty to his partners or patrons as well as to the public, and something to himself and self-interest as well. Should the company be inclined to totter, or should damaging revelations be

elicited at one of the meetings, he was almost bound over to write them away, or at all events to take an encouraging view of things. And in that case, having the ear of so many of the shareholders, the mischief he had in his power was incalculable in the way of preventing them from saving themselves in time and in bolstering undertakings that were essentially rotten. That such things did occur, we have learned from disclosures in the law courts. The censor who betrayed his trust was tolerably safe, so long as things went well and all the markets were buoyant. But when distrust and failures brought companies to liquidation, and indignant shareholders formed committees of investigation, then honest men came to learn the truth if they did not actually recover their own.

The confiding public have to take that risk into account in following the counsels of the city column in their favourite journal; although, as we have said, we believe it is not very often that there is a case of actual treachery. What is more generally to be guarded against is the political bent of the paper when it is extending its patronage, for reasons of state, to some financial combination of international speculators. The checkered history of the Khedive's affairs has been a case singularly in point. Egyptian investors have had a surprising turn of luck of late; and we hope their satisfaction with their prospects may be justified by results. It is certain, however, that at one time they came almost as near to shipwreck as their unfortunate neighbours who had been financing for the Porte; and repeatedly some slight turn in circumstances might have made their holdings almost unmarketable. Yet it was unpleasantly significant that, through that prolonged crisis, the newspapers

ranged themselves upon opposite sides, writing on the Egyptian outlook with impossible consistency, and being sanguine or despairing as the case might be. Some made the worst of the unfavourable facts, and exaggerated all the disturbing rumours, while others suppressed them or explained them away. As it has happened, Egyptians have apparently turned up trumps for those who believed the best and decided to hold on. Had they gone the other way, as seemed a certainty at one time, those who followed the guides who saw everything in rose colour, would have had reason for regretting their over-confidence; and it is their luck far more than their wisdom that has brought these optimists through with credit.

And the city editor should be not only honest but discreet. Nothing can be more delicate than his responsibilities in anxious times like the present. When the public is depressed, with too good reason, it needs very little to throw it into a panic. Alarmists who have been growing lean with other people see their opportunity. Disquieting reports are industriously propagated, and deplorable facts give them ready circulation. There is a rush to sell and no buying resistance; the quotations of the shares are apt to become merely nominal in those establishments whose credit is the breath of their existence; the jobbers will hardly "make a price," and property is literally flung away. And the investor who throws his property away, may be doing the wisest thing in the circumstances, since he may be cutting short an inevitable loss, or ridding himself of terrible contingent liabilities. In many instances, however, those threatened establishments would be safe enough if they had fair-play, and were it not for the unreasonable apprehensions that are working out

their own fulfilment. Then is the time when the calming assurances of the press are invaluable, and if the city editors keep their heads and hold their pens, the crisis may be averted that would be otherwise inevitable. But the temptations to sensational writing and unseasonable warnings are very great. It is so easy to be wise after events, and so agreeable to preach or exhort when your warnings are coming home to the very hearts of the victims who are pointing your moral. Indeed there is the less reason to lay lurid colouring on your paragraphs, that the bare statement of the facts in such a catastrophe as the stoppage of the City of Glasgow Bank is sufficiently appalling in its unadorned simplicity. And on this occasion we are bound to admit, that the city writers, as a rule, have expressed themselves with praiseworthy self-restraint. They have calmed alarms instead of exciting them, and done their utmost to limit the circle of disturbance. For criticisms that may be sound in themselves may be woefully ill-timed; and the height of a half-panic is scarcely the time to show up the shortcomings and dangers of our banking system—all the less so, when it is admitted that they may be easily rectified. But as articles of this kind have been the exception and not the rule, investors have good reason to be grateful.

As for the leading financial weeklies, they have necessarily grave difficulties to contend with. They have to give judgment in most important matters at short notice; and so the shrewdest of counsellors may be tempted into over-confidence, and occasionally make a *faux pas* he would willingly retrace. But, on the whole, and considering those circumstances, few journals in the contemporary press are more care-

fully or judicially conducted. They have gradually made themselves the authorities they deserve to be. They are usually written on solid information, and have a well-established character for honesty and impartiality. They are outspoken where they ought to speak out; reticent where silence is literally golden on matters that involve the prosperity of the country, and the fortunes and happiness of innumerable individuals. In most cases their information may be trusted. It is not in their columns you must seek for the vague rumours of firms and establishments supposed to be compromised by such and such stoppages, present or prospective. They seem to confine their comments to ascertained facts, and they deal with commercial dangers and difficulties in the abstract. They rarely write on politics, except where politics are inextricably involved with finance; and their observations are the more original and the better worth reading, that they are written from a rigidly financial point of view. In broad contrast with those carefully conducted papers, are the innumerable imitations which have been issued of late years, and whose existence is generally as ephemeral as the management is discreditable. It would seem that it is possible to start a paper of a certain stamp in the city here, at an expense almost as trifling as in Paris, where some ambitious member of the Fourth Estate finds a capitalist with a few thousand francs at his disposal, and forthwith launches the 'Comète,' or the 'Pavillon Tricolor.' We need hardly say that those mushroom financial broadsheets are really the trade circulars of the advertising jobbers and brokers; men who, for the most part, are outsiders of the Stock Exchange, and whose names have an unsavoury odour, even

in the tainted atmosphere of its precincts. Some of them scarcely profess to conceal their purpose, and each member offers you a choice of means of enriching yourself, by employing the services of Messrs So & So on an extremely moderate commission. Others are directed with somewhat higher art, though the burden of the advice they dispense so liberally tends in a similar direction. The difference is that the net is not spread so unblushingly in the sight of unwary birds, and there is no obvious connection between the stocks and shares that happen to be going at an alarming sacrifice, and any gentleman who is professedly connected with the journal. But as some of these bare-faced advertising sheets have no inconsiderable circulation—many of them, indeed, are given away by the hundred—we presume that they find readers. And it might be worth the while of the habitual dabbler in short investments to subscribe for them, if, guided by some previous knowledge and experience, he were carefully to avoid most things they recommend. At the best, they make themselves the mouthpieces of individuals eager to unload of stocks that have either been temporarily inflated for a purpose, or which are sinking steadily towards the unsaleable point; of "bears" who have banded together and are breaking out upon a wrecking raid; and of promoters who still have hopes of making profits by foisting doubtful companies on the public.

It would seem to be a hard thing to float an influential journal in London, whatever it may be in Paris. Otherwise the profits of a successful venture are so enormous—one paper which sold for £500 not many years ago, is now supposed to be clearing at least £70,000

a-year—and the social and political influence it confers is so considerable, that in these days of ambition and bold speculation, the attempt would be made far more frequently. But not only must you be prepared for an original outlay and a prolonged drain, commensurate in some measure with the possible gains, but it is difficult to get a staff of practised professionals together, who will give it a reasonable chance of a start. Able and experienced men are slow to give up assured engagements. Frequently it is a case of *vos non vobis*; and, as we have just remarked, some fortunate speculator reaps the harvest that has been sown by the ruined promoters. With a new magazine it is a different thing altogether. You find a publisher, and you catch your editor—and catching the editor is easy enough. There are men and women of more or less literary reputation, who are ready enough to lend their names by way of puff for the sake of some additional notoriety. They will be powers in a small way—or in a greater; nor do they dislike the sense of authority involved in patronising or snubbing aspiring contributors. We fancy that in most cases the work of supervision sits easily on them. "All contributions may be carefully considered;" but we have a shrewd suspicion that we know what is meant by that. Distinctly written manuscripts have the fairer chance; for any one who has the slightest critical or editorial qualifications can tell, on a very superficial inspection, whether the applicant, in sending in his testimonials, is craving a favour or laying them under an obligation. Generally speaking, there is some small *clique* or *coterie* of little-knowns, who have rallied round the new chief, and undertaken to help him to work a monopoly. So the services of absolutely anonymous

outsiders are at a discount; while very often the title of the proffered article may indicate as much as the name of the writer. Nineteen-twentieths of the packets that carry such a burden of hopes and fears are returned "with thanks," after having taxed the resources of the office to the extent of opening and making them up again. There are exceptions, we know, to that mode of editing. Magazines, like ancient families, must have a beginning somewhere; and there are editors who are determined to do their utmost for the new venture which at best has to contend with long-established favourites, and who take a positive pleasure in unearthing undeveloped genius. And that is the editor to whom we should pin our faith, had we been rash enough to stake something pecuniarily on his enterprise. When he draws his chair round to the fire after dinner, and lights his post-prandial pipe or cigar, in place of taking up the evening journal, or some rival periodical, he helps himself to a heavy armful of papers. Lying back luxuriously on his cushions, with vague hopes of possible discoveries to soothe him, he flips his fingers through the pages of manuscript. A sample or two, taken almost at random, suffices. With a shrug of the shoulders he throws a packet aside, and another and another follows in course, with what the unfortunate rejected would call most hasty judgment; when suddenly he draws himself together. There is something in the set and stiffening of the shoulders that might suggest a pointer drawing in a scent, or a spaniel cocking its ears in a cover, while a sparkle of dawning interest lights up his indifferent eyes. There is really something in this young man. That expressive picture by itself bears some evidence of original genius. There is talent in that scene, though it may

be crudely conceived, and power in those characters, although they are sketchy and unshapely. The story may have to be revised or rewritten, but it contains the elements of a success, and the promise of a literary career. He sits down on the spur of the moment and dashes off a note. The novice receives it next morning with a throbbing pulse, and is elevated straightway to the seventh heaven. He keeps the momentous appointment in a mingled state of nervous excitement and irrepressible jubilation, for we may presume that he has the sensitive literary temperament. And in the place of the austere critic, whose approbation he has had the audacity to court, he makes a cordial and sympathetic acquaintance, who mingles advice with hearty encouragement, and welcomes him as a man and a brother into the aspiring guild of the penmen.

A word of warm approbation in season is worth anything to the diffident young *débutant*, who must necessarily have felt, in his maiden attempts, like a school-boy preparing a task, or a probationer going in for competitive examination. It gives him the confidence that sends him forward in his swing, in place of pausing to hesitate between trains of thought, and pick and choose among particular phrases. His head may be turned later, and he may very likely sin on the side of over-confidence, till he is brought back to his bearings by some disagreeable experiences which show him that he must not presume upon his gifts. But he has learned that he has powers if he chooses to exert them—that he has some literary taste into the bargain,—and that is everything, so far as the initial step is concerned. And the enlisting of such vigorous recruits is the chief secret of success to a new magazine. Writing comes,

after all, to be a matter of pounds, shillings, and pence, and of personal credit. The best men, or the second best, will not write for utterly inadequate remuneration; more especially when they appear in a measure to compromise their reputations by mixing themselves up with obscure or inferior company. Now and then one of them may be bribed by a price to forward a contribution which shall serve as a costly advertisement; but even then there are odds that the master has done his work in slovenly or perfunctory style. And the longest practice can never supply the lack of talent with beaten hacks who have failed elsewhere, and who have been hitched together in a scratch team to labour up-hill in new harness against the brilliant action that has outpaced them already. But freshness, when united to versatility, goes for even more than knack and skill. There must always be many men coming on who should prove superior to the average of established writers; and with their freshness in their favour, they can make reading more attractive than that which is chiefly recommended by names which the public are already beginning to be wearied of.

The newspapers must retain on their professional staff men who are sacrificing everything to the exigencies of their calling;—men who are in the habit of turning night into day; who are ready to write a leader upon anything at a moment's notice, and who must leave their address at the office of their journal, when they drop in to dinner with a friend. But any clever dilettante or amateur may linger over his magazine article or story, sending it in when it suits his convenience after he has polished the style to his fancy. His brilliancy may dazzle the public to-

day, but it will shine forth with undiminished lustre in a twelve-month. And the range of his possible subjects is as wide as the whole scope and sphere of mortal interests. All depends upon the method of handling: even the differential calculus may be made entertaining; and the more entertaining from the surprises he is preparing for his readers. Say, for instance, you introduce a philosophical mathematician in his study, distracted from the pursuits of a lifetime by a passion for some blooming beauty,—and we may leave the imagination of our readers to fill in the rest. And as hope always tells a flattering tale to the literary aspirant, ingenious treatment of the most impracticable subjects seems to be easily within the reach of everybody. Thus contributors to the various grades of the magazines are cropping up continually in all conceivable quarters. The fine lady in studied morning *négligé*, and stockings that are slightly tinted with blue, is seated before the davenport in her boudoir previous to the duties of the luncheon and the afternoon drive, dashing off lyrics of the Loves or soft stories of the affections, on wire-woven note-paper with rose-coloured quills: while the astronomer in his study is stooping his intelligence to make science easy for some popular periodical; and dilating, from the point of view of the people, on the revolutions of the spheres or the eccentricities of the comets. Different magazines have their various specialities; but nothing comes amiss to the catholic-minded editor, from the latest conjectures on the origin of species to half-hours with the sirens of the stage or missionary misadventures in the South Seas.

Next, perhaps, to the growth of the circulating libraries, nothing proves more clearly the spread of

intelligent interest and the taste for miscellaneous reading, than the wonderful multiplication of the lighter monthlies. Not a few have a hard struggle for life; but when some expire there are others to replace them. In the old days of the 'Gentleman's Magazine,' Sylvanus Urban filled his close-printed pages chiefly with remarks upon his weekly contemporaries, and with notices of public affairs, interspersed and enlivened with scraps of gossip. It is curious to glance back on the early numbers and read the criticisms on the heavy historical papers in the 'Craftsman,' &c.; or the reports on the military operations in the North; on the marching and countermarching of Sir John Cope and 'Mr' Hawley; on the advance of the Highland host, and the trials and executions of the unhappy Jacobite gentry. The 'Gentleman's Magazine' was in fact a gentleman's newspaper; and more of a mere reporter than the daily journals of our time. Fiction was a thing apart—a task not to be lightly undertaken, and the ponderous results were in many-volumed octavos. We may imagine the precise author of 'Sir Charles Grandison,' sitting down to his heavy labours, like Buffon, in court suit and in ruffles. Fielding and Smollett were condemned, not for indecency, but for vulgarity, when they dared to be truthful and facetious, and actually succeeded in being amusing. The time of short stories and telling serial sketches had not come as yet. In the dearth of writers and the scarcity of readers, there were few literary performances to be reviewed. The writers of 'Ramblers,' even when they were contributors to "Sylvanus," published solemn essays in separate form. They sought for appreciation in the coffee-houses and in the circles of literary connoisseurs. All

that casts a clear side-light on the uneducated dulness of the society of the times. An ordinary dinner-party is wearisome enough now; it must have been many times more intolerable then, had one not been bred to the habit of it. We can imagine the worthy women sitting stiffly in hoops and stomachers, on high-backed chairs, giving themselves over to the earnest occupation of the hour, while the squires were laying a foundation for serious drinking. The talk must have been as light and æsthetic as the *menu*, which consisted chiefly of barons and sirloins, with such trifles as sucking-pigs and turkeys thrown in by way of "kickshaws." A few fine ladies might get up on their hobbies, and chatter over the mania of the day,—china, pug-dogs, and court trains—Shakespeare, Garrick, and the musical glasses. Their less fashionable sisters, when scandal ran short, could only sit in silence or compare notes over domestic grievances. The men, when the cloth was cleared away, might grow animated over their port; and most of them took an interest in parochial business if not in public affairs. But their talk, at the best, was limited to the next move of the Ministers, or the latest news from the Low Countries—to their crops and cattle, their horses and hounds. Now, the Squires Western have taken university degrees, bring their ladies to town for a third of the year, and are as much at home in European questions as on their ancestral acres. They have sat for their county or on their member's election committee; their sons are in the Church, the army, or the colonies; everybody you meet in society appears to have a respectable income, and the means of bestowing some cultivation on his mind. The younger son, who would have been a hanger-on a hundred years

ago—a bailiff or a better sort of keeper on the family estate, great upon farming and on the drenching of cows—is now, superficially at least, a well-informed gentleman. His wife or sister, in the intervals of husband-hunting and lawn-tennis, has found time to sit at the feet of philosophers, and listen to the eloquence of popular lecturers. They manœuvre for tickets for the Geographical Society and the Royal Institution as their grandmothers used to do for *vouchers* to Almack's; and if they have but vague notions of the sense of modern speculation, at all events they have caught some echoes of its sound. They have their artistic and literary idols whom they worship; and in art and literature, as well as religion, they profess some fashionable form of belief. Few of them can shine by good looks alone, and they are bound to cultivate a habit of babbling. They would far sooner be guilty of a solecism in good-breeding, than confess to being taken aback upon any conceivable subject. Tact and judicious reserve go for a great deal; but they must have some skeleton framework of general information. And in supplying them with what they want, with the smallest expenditure of trouble, the lighter or more frivolous magazines are invaluable. The "padding" is often the more serviceable in that way. Run over the lists of "contents" for the month, and you see where to turn for the knowledge you may be the better for, while contriving to combine some amusement with instruction. The 'Gentleman's Magazine' of our time—and a very pleasantly conducted periodical it is—is to the 'Gentleman's Magazine' of Cave and Sylvanus Urban, as the society of her present Majesty's reign, to the society of her grandfather "Farmer George."

The birth of the 'Edinburgh

Review' marked the beginning of a new era. But the brilliant literary brotherhood who clubbed their brains in the Scottish capital, necessarily wrote for the few rather than the many, as their successors are writing now. They had no slight advantage, not only in having exclusive possession of the field, but in the authority they claimed, and which was conceded to them in some departments. The Areopagites of the modern Athens assumed that they were absolute arbiters in all matters of home and foreign politics, in the arts and sciences, and in literary taste. The new ally of the Whig party was extremely serviceable politically; but as it had its origin in the violence of party spirit, it rather provoked party opposition than dominated it. In science and literature it was otherwise. Philosophers and authors might murmur and protest; but there were no tribunals of equal influence to which they could carry their sentences for reconsideration. The critics had the self-assurance of youth as well as its life and freshness; they had the art of putting doubtful points so as to make the worse seem the better reason; and although we doubt not that they desired to do substantial justice, yet not a few of them had marked individualities and pronounced opinions. To a critical anatomist like Jeffrey, to a born wit like Sydney Smith, the temptation to be bitter must often have been irresistible; and we know that Brougham, with all his talents, was made up of prejudices and crochets, and was in a measure an impostor. His irrepressible activity and galvanic versatility must often have made him mischievously unfair. In contributing half-a-dozen of articles to a number, he must have embarrassed the editor as much as he helped him; and

as we stumble across the frequent shortcomings and blunders in the deliberate productions of his maturer years, we can only pity many of the victims who were dragged up before him for summary judgment. It was high time that there should be a rival review to impress the necessity of greater caution on the dashing gentlemen of 'The Edinburgh;' and 'The Quarterly' is another item in the debt of gratitude which the world of letters will always owe them. Sir Walter Scott showed his habitual shrewdness when, in advising Murray as to the management of the new Review, he urged the necessity of an invariable rule of forcing cheques upon all contributors. Some of the most brilliant of the Tories, with Canning at their head, would have been willing and happy to render their services gratuitously; but even with quarterlies and the monthlies, as with the daily newspapers, a liberal paymaster must be the backbone of a lasting success. We fancy that the man, whatever his means, who is altogether superior to pecuniary considerations, is more of a phenomenon than we are apt to suppose. Most people will have value for their time in some shape or another, and self-approval scarcely seems a sufficient reward for the pains that have been bestowed on anonymous authorship. Since then, that liberally profitable principle has been universally adopted. It is well understood that any periodical must waste away in a decline unless its supporters are suitably and invariably remunerated. And with the quarterlies the system has proved especially advantageous; for we take it to be the secret of their lasting vitality, in these days when everybody is living so fast, that a quarter seems much the same thing as a century. In the first number of 'The Edinburgh Review' there were

no less than twenty-nine articles—a profusion evidently inconsistent with the essential conditions of a publication which made its appearance only four times in the year. Now we may take the quarterly average at nine or ten. There can hardly be said to be a limit as to length; or at least a most generous licence is allowed to a writer where an important subject demands exhaustive treatment. Hence one of the learned pundits who, when he goes to negotiate for a couple of folio volumes, receives but small encouragement in Paternoster Row, is tempted every now and then to skim his brain for the benefit of the editors of those serious periodicals. Our readers may remember a recent judicial tragedy, when a laborious clergyman of much erudition was driven over the verge of insanity, and betrayed into a murderous homicide by his heart-breaking failure in the career of letters. He had published—literally—largely, with one of the leading and most liberal houses in the metropolis, and yet his gains had been so small as to be almost illusory. Probably, with a twentieth part of the trouble, he might have made many times the money had he sent an occasional article to one of the quarterlies; and instead of wasting his time and wrecking his life in labouring over monuments by which he will never be remembered, he might have felt that his studies had been useful to his kind, while the hearth that he stained with blood was made a happy one.

The quarterlies are most solidly established, we believe, on those occasional articles of special value, which not only deserve to live themselves, but which reflect their credit on the contrasts of other numbers. Calling on our recollections, almost at random, we may refer to the most suggestive essay on the Tal-

mud and the historical principles of the Hebrew faith and polity by the lamented orientalist, Emmanuel Deutsch. You may look to find, from time to time, the result of the studies and careful reflections of a lifetime. There are subjects of the day which lose rather than gain by the most deliberate treatment. There are others, such as archæology or art, which are none the worse for any amount of keeping. Now you have an eminent Church dignitary expressing himself with equal authority and knowledge on the latest developments of Tractarian and Ritualistic excesses. If the critic in one periodical inclines to extremes, the glove is almost certain to be taken up in the other. Now you have an exhaustive paper on the latest results of scientific explorations in Palestine, or on the much-disputed sites of the Holy Places. Now you have an article on the excavations in Mycenæ or the Troad, enriched and made engrossingly suggestive and entertaining by its wealth of classical and archæological research. And again you are delighted by a lucid summary of the political geography or the geographical politics of some borderland peopled by semi-barbarous tribes, which seems likely to become the battle-ground of liberalism and absolutism. These contributions are assumed to be anonymous, no doubt; but everybody who is interested to know may inform himself as to the authorship. And the acknowledged authority of a great name awakens curiosity and commands respect, when it does not actually carry conviction. We fear that the articles on current politics are at least as often a drag as an assistance. They are demanded by long-standing traditions, nor could they well be omitted, unless the venerated organs of the Whigs and the Conservatives were to agree to

divest themselves of what remains to them of their old political power. Sometimes the publication of an able manifesto by a minister or an ex-minister, sends a particular number through several editions. Independently of his acknowledged political ability, and any gifts of vigorous pamphleteering that he may possess, the ideas of the writer must have a permanent interest, since they may foreshadow the future policy of a cabinet. But necessarily, in those days of swift transition, quarterly political articles on passing events must almost inevitably have the appearance of being behind the news of the day. Maturely considered and lucidly argued they may have been, but they are likely to bear the evidences of hurried revision. The shrewdest prescience has been confounded, the soundest logical conclusions have been upset, by the unexpected surprises which time has been preparing; and the most cursory reader may hit upon the blots which have escaped the hasty correction of the thoughtful author. At the best, he has to go back upon the arguments which have been thoroughly threshed out *ad nauseam* by the dailies, weeklies, and monthlies. It will do him credit, indeed, if he can make a new point,

or accomplish anything better than a clever summing-up by a judge who is avowedly confounding himself with the advocate.

We may add, in conclusion, that the quarterlies, as a rule, have been singularly fortunate in the choice of their editors, and that goes far to account for their continued popularity. They might have passed under the direction of book-worms or bookish students, in whose hands they would have become insupportably ponderous. On the contrary, since the days of Jeffrey and Gifford, of Lockhart and Macvey Napier, they have been conducted by accomplished scholars who have mixed familiarly and easily in the world, and who have had the tact and good sense to lighten their "contents" with a fair proportion of popular subjects. Some of the most graceful biographical sketches of the political leaders of fashionable society—sketches that were written by intimate friends; some of the very best contributions on hunting and field-sports; some of the most sparkling articles on dress, art, music, cookery, lawn-tennis, and heaven knows what besides,—making their appearance in the pages of those weighty periodicals, have been found worthy of preservation in more accessible forms.

THE NOVELS OF ALPHONSE DAUDET.

FRENCH novels have, and with justice, a bad name in England. Most of us have a corner somewhere full of these yellow volumes, unbound, and often not worth the binding, either, so to speak, in body or in soul; volumes in which bad paper, indifferent print, indifferent writing, and atrocious morality, make up the very worst example of the thing called a book which modern times have known; volumes picked up on railway journeys, which we are by no means anxious to communicate to our households. A great many people think and believe that there is a universal brilliancy of wit or play of sentiment in these works which make them dangerous; that they are, as the pleasures they portray are supposed also to be, seductive beyond description, full of vigour and passion and charm. If they were so, there would be a certain justification of their existence, a licence to live and to be read which they do not now possess; for, to tell the truth, a great many of these performances which travellers buy with a not disagreeable thrill of stealthy pleasure, as of something rather wrong, and sure to be exciting, are as dull in their debauchery as the dullest English sketch of the domestic circle, full of the flavour of muffins and tea. There is nothing new in vice, any more than in virtue; and no excitements pall so quickly as those which address themselves to a feverish imagination and depraved appetite. Vice, indeed, is of all atmospheres the most narrow and limited. It is contracted by its very nature. It has no resource except in repetitions, in sickening details which cannot be brightened by any newly-invented catastrophe,

but can lead to one climax only. A course of reading more fatiguing, more disgusting, more wearisome, than that of those romances, falsely so called, which ring the changes upon one way after another of breaking the law of purity, and contemplate the varied and many-sided human being only in one aspect, cannot be imagined. To read through the lesser works even of a great genius like that of Balzac, leaves an intolerable sense of dullness, narrowness, meanness, upon the mind. Here and there, where his great powers blaze forth into a study of mankind, terrible though odious, like that which appals the reader in the 'Père Goriot,' we are seized upon by the awful tragedy which can weave in every combination of folly and wickedness into its sombre web, without losing the higher force of fate and misery in it; but even Balzac, at his ordinary, is full of the monotonous repetition, which cannot be got rid of when the mind of the writer and the attention of the reader are concentrated upon the means of forming an illicit connection, or of keeping it interesting when formed. They are not piquant, as we hope they must be, since so wrong; but dull, more dull than a record of Sunday-schools. And when the work is in indifferent hands, the result is more monstrous, more sickening still; a series of nauseous scenes, more flat in the ardours of so-called passion than are the minute details of tea-parties which we have, or have had, on this side of the Channel. To see the little pride of naughtiness, the conscious smile of superior enlightenment, yet pretended compunction, with which a man who prides himself on being of the world,

or a woman above prejudice, confesses to a knowledge of the books which "it would not do to leave lying about, don't you know?" is enough to make any malicious demon laugh. "I have got hold of the very worst book that ever was written, I think," says one fashionable critic to another. "I shall burn it when I have done with it." "But let me see it first," says the other, eagerly. And yet the work thus characterised will be like ditch-water, boiling hotly, splashing and sputtering in muddy bubbles, but with neither flavour nor savour, save that of the miserable ooze from whence it came.

However, though this is the case with so much contemporary French fiction, it is no more a universal law than is the other counterbalancing faith which opens French houses and families to English novels without exception, making the very name of Tauchnitz a guarantee of moral excellence. It is not always certain nowadays that an English story is safe reading; and no more is it certain that a French one, however yellow, contains a chapter of dull and dismal vice, and nothing more. The works of Alphonse Daudet are a most hopeful and consolatory proof that France is thankful to escape from the shower of mud that is being rained over her, and retains the better taste of a healthful human imagination after all. Of the volumes which lie before us, one is in its forty-third, the other in its forty-fourth edition; while the unmitigated filth of M. Zola, for example, which has somehow drifted to the side of the more wholesome productions, shows no such evidence of acceptance. A reputation so large and popular could scarcely arise without legitimate reason; and the spice of contemporary scandal contained in these books is not enough to give

more than a temporary impetus to their circulation. Those who would form some acquaintance with France as it is, or was some twenty years ago, will scarcely find a better guide than in the picture here described. It does not reveal a pure society—far from it; nor does it present us with any ideal of honest public life which is equal to our own. Swindling and sham are portrayed in it in full career—false charity, false trade, false statesmanship; and the relations of men and women are treated with that impartiality, if we may use the expression, which characterises all literature but our own. But the world is not narrowed into a shameful chamber, nor all the concerns of life subordinated to an intrigue, as in the other books to which we have referred. The good and the evil stand together; there is the breadth of a solid, round world, full of differing interests and serious complications, in which other passions than one are involved. Vice is not left out of the count, but there is no choice of vice, nor lingering preference for its debasing records. And while Daudet's works are not to be recommended, according to the favourite sneer of French criticism, as specially adapted for a *pensionnat de demoiselles*, neither are they to be apprehended as unfit reading for any pure-minded woman. The world they deal with is not a virtuous world, yet virtue lives in it, and struggles, and is not always beaten; and evil, if it often triumphs basely, is never more than base, and wears no gloss of fictitious delicacy or beauty. The wicked wife is a mean little *intrigante*, as contemptible as she is depraved—not a sentimental heroine; and the triumphant lover a Cockney and a fool,—in the only one of these novels which at all hinges upon this favourite topic. But even with this

manly treatment, M. Daudet does not find the subject inspiring, and soon throws it aside for other themes and interests more broad and general. How life can be tragically confused and overcast by the shadow upon it of wickedness not its own; how folly and vice, wherever these rotten threads twine into the web, rend it across and across, tearing hearts and lives asunder,—is the sombre yet not ignoble theme which has engaged his imagination. It involves a great many terrible elements, in the inevitable crushings of fate out of which the victim cannot escape, and the devotion with which that victim gives himself, consciously, to expiate faults which are not his own. Sometimes the struggles of duty and affection against disgust and disgrace are the inspiration of the tale; sometimes the delusions and disenchantments of an honest soul amid deceit and lying. Such are the subjects M. Daudet has chosen. His books are sad with the burden of a life unsatisfactory, vain and false and full of trouble, beset by lies, preyed upon by harpies, delivered over to those cruelties of civilisation which crush the weak. But the conflict they set before us is very different from the sentimental struggle between a fashionable fine lady and a hero of the *salons*, the arts of mutual seduction, the fears of discovery, the sickening loves and quarrels which drag their tedious detail through so many contemporary volumes.

There is perhaps another reason why the works of M. Daudet have attracted special notice in England. Critics have found out—with some reason, no doubt, yet with less reason, we think, than they take for granted—a marked influence from our own literature in the style and character of his books. It has become common to say that he has been trained in the school of

Dickens; and various resemblances, more or less well founded, can, no doubt, be pointed out, especially after the first suggestion has set the reader's wits astir. Here there is an oddity of a pedlar, more formally odd than French *finesse* is apt to be content with; there a gushing ideal family, more bound to the household lamp and uncharacteristic *thé*, than ever Parisians were known to be in their own right. And there is enough of evidence to justify the assertion that in these and some other particulars the leading of a foreign guide is perceptible. But to an unbiassed mind the likeness will scarcely ever show more strongly than is legitimate and pleasing. The copiers of Dickens in English have not left any very favourable impression on our mind. They have been, like copyists in general, more clever in following the extravagances than the strong points of their leader; and as time has made these extravagances more apparent by breaking the link of personal attraction which binds his generation to a great living writer, the indifference of the public mind to his school has lapsed into a stronger feeling—a feeling of almost dislike. The difference, however, of the French, and the faintness of the echo, prevent us from any such sensation in respect to M. Daudet. The indication of a following, perhaps unconscious, of the English novelist whose works represent the favourite French view of English life, is rather a compliment than a plagiarism. We are pleased unconsciously by the influence which comes from ourselves as a nation, even though we may not ourselves care for Dickens as a model. And the influence of English literature of this description upon French is novel, and interests the reader. Except in the single instance of

Scott, the stream of influence has usually gone the other way; and the well-worn saying, "They do these things better in France," has never been more used than in respect to novels—the English tediousness of which, as compared with consummate French skill, conciseness, and grace, have been pointed out a thousand times. It is therefore a little solace to our national *amour propre* to find the most popular of French romancers copying something from a school so insular and even Cockney as that of Dickens. Paris has indeed a Cockneyism still more marked than that of London, and the humours of the two great capitals meet sympathetically at various points; but it is in a narrow and more exclusively personal way that M. Daudet has taken the leading of his English predecessor.

The first of the series, not yet at all an extended one, is the least remarkable in construction and the least effective as a contemporary picture, but yet is powerful and striking. It is a tale of Parisian life in the *bourgeois* class, drawn upon the ordinary lines of French romance—a simple husband deceived on one side, and a saintly wife on the other, with a pair of sinners between, in whose vulgar intrigue there is nothing to shut the eyes of the reader for an instant to the inherent ugliness and wretchedness of their sin. It is, however, in the scene to which they introduce us, and the noble and loyal character of the deceived husband, that the charm of the book lies. *Fromont Jeune and Risler Aîné* is a firm of paper-manufacturers established in the Marais, in a huge old hotel with a garden, round which rise the workshops, the studios, all the different buildings necessary for the production of the wall-papers which are their special industry.

The highest members of this little society are the young Fromont and his wife, the aristocrats of the story, rich young tradespeople, separated by only one step from the makers of their fortune, but yet holding a tranquil superiority as of ever so many quarterings over the little crowd in their employment—among whom the other personages of the tale are found. Risler aîné has been the chief designer and most faithful workman of the Fromonts. It is a curious tribute to that Alsace which France laments so deeply, that nowhere can the novelist find so ready a type of simple honesty and goodness as among her children and the other French-Teutons who hold a similar position. We had written the first part of this sentence under the impression that the brothers Risler, with their simple hearts, their sound honesty, their unselfish devotion, were Alsacians, like Balzac's Schumek, and like the honest peasants of MM. Erckmann-Chatrian. The mistake is a not unnatural one, to judge by their language; but on going back to the book we find that the Rislers are Swiss, a kindred race; and so is Sigismond Planus, the old cashier of the establishment, the impersonation of virtue and loyalty, true to his trust and to his friend save when he thinks that friend himself swerving from the ways of honour. Beside the *fabrique*, the great establishment of the Fromonts, round which, with its *ateliers* and workshop and the private house of the master, which the workmen and their families regard with pride and admiration as the home of happiness and splendour—we find another little group of families on the top-storey of a house near, where there are three little sets of apartments on one landing, inhabited by Risler and his young brother

Frantz, and by the families Chèbe and Delobelle. From the window the little Sidonie Chèbe looks down upon the manufactory with all its wealth, and upon Claire, the little heiress, and her cousin, playing in the garden, with admiration, with envy and longing. It is the paradise towards which this little peri directs all her thoughts ; and when the good Risler, never weary of boasting of his beloved manufactory to his friends, or of making known the virtues of his friends to his patrons and superiors, at last gets an invitation for her to a child's ball in this enchanted palace, the head of the little coquette is turned, and the course of her life is decided. The three little *ménages* upon this landing, *au cinquième*, complete the groups of the little drama. They are all set before us with the utmost care, with minute touches, and with fine little strokes of satire. Chèbe and Delobelle might have stepped out of Dickens, had Dickens ever been able to conquer the charm of that difference which makes men French. The one is an old *commerçant*, in whose mind the recollections of the time when he had a horse and tilbury (which is the French interpretation of the gig of respectability), raise him above the acceptance of lower occupations. "Who can reckon the fantastic follies, the silly eccentricities with which an unoccupied *cit* succeeds in filling up the void of his life?" says the author. M. Chèbe made himself rules, to give importance to his daily movements. All the time that the Boulevard de Sebastopol was building he went out twice a-day to see "how it was getting on." His wife at home is but too glad to give him an occasional commission to get rid of his constant presence and projects ; and the good man makes it the object of half a day's exertions to procure "two *brioche*s, of the value of three

sous, which he brought in triumphantly, wiping his forehead." The Chèbe family are *petits rentiers*, with just enough to live on ; and Madame continues to possess a Cashmere shawl, and two little diamond buttons, which give her glory in the eyes of her neighbours. Delobelle is an old comedian, "éloigné du théâtre depuis quinze ans par la mauvaise volonté des directeurs," yet with perfect faith in himself and in some heaven-taught manager who will still open to him the way to fame. His wife and his daughter—the poor, little, lame and pale Desirée, pretty and sad and sentimental—labour night and day at the dainty manufacture and arrangement of "oiseaux et mouches pour mode," with one great aim before them, "the dramatic glory of the illustrious Delobelle." Chèbe and Delobelle patronise equally the honest Risler, who occupies the third of the little apartments, and who has no thought but his *fabrique*, his designs, and his master, whom he adores. The honest fellow—half Teuton or more, shy, and no great talker, ashamed of his own accent and rustic air—is delightfully looked down upon by his neighbours. They have over him "the immense superiority of the man who does nothing over him who works"—a superiority which Chèbe exhibits frankly, while Delobelle, more gracious, condescends to him with effusive kindness. Risler believes in them both, he helps their wives secretly, takes them all to the theatre on Sundays, and gets his friends to accept from him perpetual *chopes* of beer. The picture is very like Dickens, but it is not so detailed and long-drawn-out ; French custom does not exact three volumes. Nevertheless, the vanity and selfishness of the restless old *rentier*, with his dreams of "la haute commerce,"

and of the superannuated comedian heroically vowing never to renounce the theatre, are entirely according to the humour of our great fictionist; and so in one case is the little household behind,—Desirée and her mother working hard at their *mouches* to keep the great actor in toilet, and give him something in his pocket with which to *flâner* at his ease. Little Sidonie spying from her window the garden of the *fabrique*, and the wealthy house where she spends now and then an hour of paradise with Claire and Georges, and tastes the delights of wealth—is of a different inspiration. She in her folly and prettiness, her longing after money and grandeur and gaiety, her self-absorbed little being, is the key of the tragedy. “Personne n’a jamais pu savoir ce qu’elle pensait,” says her mother. Sidonie is of the school of George Eliot rather than of Dickens. Frantz, the poor young Risler, her neighbour, adores her. So, in an aimless way, does Georges Fromont, the young master. So does Risler ainé, he who invents all her pleasures for her, and watches over her growth, and regards her with a gentle, patient adoration, until it pleases the little *intrigante* to announce that it is he whom she loves—and to marry him, to his misery and ruin.

Amid the group of characters so distinctly marked, the effect of this little creature without character, this colourless being, with her frizzed locks, her pretty figure, her little airs and graces, “des élégances un peu apprêtées de la demoiselle de magasin,” is wonderful. They all love and admire her, but she loves nobody. She loves her own ease, her own advancement, luxury, pleasure, and pretty things around her; but even her prettinesses are all vulgar, and her taste false. The *ennui* of the Sunday excursions,

when all the rest of the party are so gay, and she alone finds their pleasures beneath her, dislikes the wild-flowers as she does her own lilac print, and sighs for the carriages and the finery which are out of her reach; and the silent revolt with which she turns from all the details of her humble life, yet fulfils them, never complaining, never revealing herself, though with her eyes intent upon every possible outlet of escape—make up a very powerful picture. No one of all the people round her suspects what kind of being she is. Her acceptance, then rejection of Frantz, as having mistaken her feelings; her sudden discovery, when Risler ainé becomes a partner in the great *usine*, that it is he whom she has loved all the time, are received with perfect faith by all as the sincere workings of her veiled spirit. She is perfectly commonplace, ignorant, silly, without even those instincts which (especially in novels) make untrained girls bloom into women of the world with scarcely an interval; not great enough to be tragic, only invulnerable in frivolous selfishness and lovelessness, and carrying destruction round her. How a thing so trifling, childish, and unimportant can all but ruin a community, and can break the heart and destroy the life of the noble and simple hero without ever disturbing a feather of her own painted plumage—turning up again irrepressible after the havoc she has made, in sheer force of no-feeling—it has been the author’s task to set forth; and he has done it with wonderful force and simplicity. This work, which first brought its author into notice, was “couronné par l’Académie Française,” and shows that the Academy knows what it is about, in the matter of fiction at least.

We will not attempt to touch the highly-wrought tragedy of the

conclusion, nor to show the heroic desperation—in which his rude and simple nature mixes something cruel, almost brutal—with which the deceived husband turns from the contemplation of his own misery in order to save from bankruptcy the house which his wife has ruined. She has ruined him still more completely, but Risler must save the Maison Fromont whatever becomes of himself. As he tears the jewels from her neck and arms, and dictates to the companion of her guilt the terms of their new contract, by which he gives up his partnership and becomes once more “simple commis” in order to restore the credit and prosperity of the house, the big and rude Teuton with his peasant roughness becomes sublime; that terrible climax, those heights of stern misery, neither change his language nor his manners. He keeps his natural tone, his workman roughness, through all. Passion does not change him into a gentleman, or give him any varnish of refinement. When he has denuded himself of everything, even the furniture of his house, the wretched Georges, who is as guilty as Sidonïe, utters a cry of protestation.

“‘Mais c’est impossible,’ dit Georges. ‘Je ne peux pas souffrir cela.’”

“Risler se retourna avec un mouvement d’indignation. ‘Comment dites-vous ? Qu’est-ce que vous ne souffrirez pas ?’”

“‘Claire l’arrêtâ d’une geste suppliant. ‘C’est vrai—c’est vrai,’ murmura-t-il ; et il sortit bien vite pour échapper à cette tentation que lui venait de laisser enfin déborder tout son cœur.’”

We will not venture, however, to enter further into the catastrophe, which has a still deeper chapter of pain to reach.

In the ‘Nabab,’ M. Daudet strikes a far bolder note. His first work had attracted a great deal of no-

tice, and had opened his career with a triumph ; but the next which followed is perhaps the boldest piece of contemporary criticism that has been made in this generation. It is not the same kind of personal satire which gave force to the play of “Rabagas”—a satire broad enough to be perceived even at this distance. We do not pretend to enter, with knowledge of the circumstances, into any history of the real Nabob whose image is suggested to all who knew Parisian society a dozen years ago by the figure of Bernard Jansoulet, and the bold picture of his sorrow and wrongs. English readers in general will neither know nor care for the actual model who sat for this strange yet attractive portrait ; nor will they take any interest in the clamour of gossip which the publication of the work called forth. It contains, indeed, one sketch which it is impossible not to identify ; and fortunately, the representation of the Duc de Mora here given is not likely to hurt the reputation of the original. The author, however, has entirely changed his scene and surroundings. Instead of the out-of-the-way corner of the Marais, the background of the *usine*, the society of rich *industriels* and little tradesfolk, we have now the greater stage of Paris, with all the big shams of its corrupt society under the Empire, exposed with an unflinching hand. The plausible fashionable doctor with his work of sham philanthropy—his big hospital, and the miserable children who are at once his decoys and victims—and the *Perles Jenkins* which stimulate his patients into fictitious vigour only to kill them more quickly at the end ; the magnificent bureaux of the *Caisse Territoriale* with its “*huit fenêtres de façade en plein Boulevard Malesherbes*,” and its little band of officials living upon

the money paid by unhappy shareholders, or the few unwary depositors who fell into the snare of the big establishment; nay, even the sham fine lady, Marquise de Bois-Landry, whose profession it is to show off a fashionable *modiste's* last inventions, appearing magnificently dressed, a walking advertisement at every imperial *fête* and fashionable assembly,—form among them the background of falsehood and vain show, against which the rude, frank, homely figure of the Nabob, true as honest meaning can make him, yet vain, vulgar, purse-proud, and ostentatious, is disclosed to us. None but a Frenchman, perhaps, would venture to set before us so plainly, and engage our sympathies so warmly for a figure so unideal. Though we give ourselves credit for so much unexaggerated honesty of portraiture, and profess so largely the creed of realism in art, no English artist ever attempts a treatment so impartial. Even Thackeray, though he laughs at his greatest favourites and refuses to believe in a hero, makes the faults of the faulty object of his study either so adorable or so amusing that we prefer them to virtues. But Bernard Jansoulet is as far removed from Colonel Newcome as from the Archangel Michael. He is covered with the soil of earth, full of the gross vanity and vulgar ambition of the *parvenu*. Honestly, when he aids Dr Jenkins's *œuvre* of Bethlehem, it is (though with some real charity mixed in his confused ideas) the tempting bait of the Cross of the Legion of Honour to be gained by this exhibition of philanthropy which is his chief inducement. He is quite willing to gain his election—which, again, he frankly seeks as the means of assuring his financial safety—by any kind of deceit and corruption. Yet notwithstanding all this, and his pleasure in the

flatteries that surround him, and the credulous folly with which he lends his ear to all those thirsty applicants for his bounty, Jansoulet wins the reader's heart, and takes his place among the number of our imaginary friends whose troubles we weep with hot tears, and whose wrongs fill us with fury. There is not the smallest illusion attempted as to his qualities or defects; his very appearance is painted with a coarse brush, which spares not an imperfection. He is "a kind of giant, tanned, sunburnt, yellow, his head sunk between his shoulders, his short nose lost in the fulness of his visage, his coarse crisp hair massed like an Astrakan cap on his low forehead, his bristling eyebrows overshadowing the gleaming eyes, give him the ferocious aspect of a Kalmuck, of a savage Borderer, living by war and rapine." His low extraction also betrayed itself by his voice, "the voice of a Rhone boatman, hoarse and indistinct, in which the accent of the South was more coarse than harsh; and two large, short, and hairy hands, with square and nailless fingers, which, spread out upon the whiteness of the tablecloth, proclaimed their own past with disagreeable eloquence." And from his first appearance on the scene, the Nabob's thirst for fashionable notice and distinction is made clearly apparent. When Monpavon, the new version of "marquis," like, yet unlike, him of Molière, the old beau with sham teeth, sham hair, sham complexion, who is one of the leaders of the sham *Caisse Territoriale*, and of many other shams, is persuading the Nabob to support with his real money the bankrupt and more than bankrupt establishment, his strongest argument is that "le duc" had "beaucoup parlé de vous." One recalls M. Jourdain's delight in hearing that he himself

had been mentioned in the king's chamber. "‘Vraiment! il vous a parlé de moi?’ Et le bon Nabob, tout glorieux, regardait autour de lui avec des mouvements de tête tout-à-fait risibles ou bien il prenait l'air recueilli d'un dévoté entendant nommer Notre-Seigneur." When again, during the course of the same meal, he is asked if he has seen what the *Messenger* says of him: "Sous le hâle épais de ses joues le Nabob rougit comme un enfant, et ses yeux brillaient de plaisir. 'C'est vrai? le *Messenger* a parlé de moi?'" "His large face shone" while the passage was being read. "Often," adds the author, "when far away, he had dreamt of being thus celebrated by Parisian papers—of being somebody in the midst of that society, the first of all society, upon which the entire world has its eyes fixed. Now his dream had become true."

But this vain and coarse *roturier* has a heart of gold. The duke and the newspapers are, after all, nothing to him, in comparison with the old peasant-mother whom he has installed in his big chateau. His follies and mistakes arise out of the very excess of his warm-hearted confidence in all around him. When he returns in the ignorant elation of wealth to buy himself all the glories and pleasures of life, among the harpies and charlatans who flock around him, side by side with M. de Monpavon, is "le chanteur Garrigou, un 'pays' de Jansoulet," the provincial ventriloquist and buffoon, whose cleverness had seemed supernatural to him in his youth; and Cabassu, the barber-chiropodist-dentist, who belonged to the same period, cordially established in the finest company; while the poor Nabob's affairs are in the hands of another local authority, the old village schoolmaster, now intendant, manager, and paymaster of

the huge, lavish, ill-regulated household. With them are a troop which reminds us again of M. Jourdain and his many instructors—the theatrical manager, the picture-dealer, the author, who give the Nabob so many opportunities of becoming a patron of the arts,—a position which his honest natural instinct feels to be in keeping with the possessor of a great fortune. His Levantine wife, "une demoiselle Afchin," who did the French adventurer so much honour in marrying him that he can never speak of it but with awe and exultation, he continues to surround with as much superstitious reverence in Paris as if the silly, luxurious, obstinate Eastern who seals his ruin were a queen; and the still deeper domestic tragedy which has overshadowed his whole life, and procures him his final overthrow, he endures with homely nobility and a self-sacrifice which is in the last degree touching. The author spares us no revelation of Jansoulet's ignorance and helplessness in the hands of the deceivers who surround him. The *fêtes* he prepares for the Bey of Tunis are the wildest of operamasquerades, with ballet-girls in the dress of peasants, and every impurity of the *coulisses* defiling the park and avenues which his manager turns into a sort of glorified Mabilles for the occasion—not without a subtle stroke of bitterness at the Imperial *fêtes* which are their model. But the Nabob takes everything with simple faith, glorying only in the unimaginable splendour of his preparations; and the reader, ranging himself instinctively on the hero's side, is as indignant at his disappointment as if Cardailhac's opera-dancers had been nymphs of Arcadia. Thus the poor millionaire is swept along in a crowd of the false and fictitious, but himself is always true—true in his goodness

and his folly, his vainglory and his ignorance, his tender heart and obtuse yet upright understanding. We are never allowed to forget how greedy of grandeur and applause he is, nor how sure of the omnipotence of his wealth; but even in the first outburst of triumphant folly he is always ready to respond to the tender touch of real feeling. After he has been hunted by all the wild beasts, hungry and eager, marquis, doctor, journalist, bankrupt, every kind of famishing harpy which could get a claw upon the prey, and after distributing cheques and money on every side, has thrown himself weary into a chair, he finds with some impatience still another suitor waiting with a letter. After a momentary glance of annoyance he is mollified by the sight of the handwriting: "Té — c'est de Maman," cries the Nabob.

"He said this with a look so happy—the word 'maman' illuminated his face with a smile so youthful, so amiable—that the visitor, at first repulsed by the vulgar aspect of the *parvenu*, felt an instant awakening of sympathy."

The grand scene of the book is that in which a noble family sentiment and tender delicacy of feeling towards this homely old peasant-mother stop the self-vindication on Jansoulet's very lips, and ruin him heroically at the very crisis of his career. Space forbids us to go through the entire story, which, besides, the reader had much better master for himself (if needs must, in the English translation recently published). It may be briefly indicated, however, as follows: Bernard Jansoulet has a brother, "l'ainé," for whom everything the poor people could do has been done, to the constant neglect and obliteration of the younger brother. At the time the story opens, "l'ainé," a wretched wreck, diseased and imbecile, after ruining the hopes and break-

ing the hearts of his family, is under the charge of the poor old mother in the Château de Saint-Romans, in which Bernard has installed her as housekeeper, and his dismal past remains an inheritance of evil to his brother, upon whom all his sins are thrown, nobody remembering, or caring to remember, that there have been two Jansoulets—one of them as honest and honourable as the other is disgraceful. From the time when the Nabob has begun to find out the falseness of the sycophants surrounding him, and to tell them so with characteristic frankness, a general hue and cry has been raised against him. The *Messenger*, which once had held him up as the benefactor of the human race, now proclaims him—through the pen of the writer to whom his purse has ceased to be open—its shame and offence, heaping up upon his unfortunate head the scandal of his brother's misdeemeanours. The Nabob all but kills the contemptible journalist, but makes no other reply. When, however, he is elected deputy for Corsica, and the whole question of his continuance or downfall rests upon the validation or invalidation of his election, and the answer he can make to these accusations, Jansoulet is on the eve of declaring the truth. He is on his trial before the Assembly—a crowd of bitter enemies against him, Mora dead who was his friend, and every influence which the Hemerlingues can buy, in active operation to defeat him. This, however, is the day on which his old mother, weary of waiting for him in the country, has come at last to Paris to see her son, to make acquaintance with her grandchildren. Not finding him in his house, she has followed to the Chamber, and with difficulty has made her way inside, and found a place whence she can see every-

thing—the pomp of the Assembly, the president in his chair, the assailable reading his report, and Bernard Jansoulet himself making his defence. The old woman listens, her head swimming, her whole attention concentrated upon the drama, in which she is far from foreseeing the effect which her appearance will have. The Nabob has resolved at last to give the answer which will exculpate himself completely. His speech, eloquent in its honest simplicity, has already gained the ear of the Assembly. He has recounted his struggles of early life—his success in the East, not due to any renegade complaisance, but because he had “carried into that country of indolence the activity and adroitness of a southern Frenchman;” and he has also told “*les peines, les angoisses, les insomnies, dont la fortune m’a accablé,*” with all the force and fervour of excited feeling.

“These words may seem cold in the form of a narrative, but there before the Assembly the man’s defence was imprinted with an eloquent and grandiose sincerity, which in that rustic, that *parvenu*, without training, without education, with his voice like a Rhone boatman, and his manners like those of a porter, first astonished, then touched the audience by its very strangeness—the wild and uncultivated vigour so far from anything that was parliamentary. Already signs of applause had moved the benches accustomed to receive the grey and monotonous downpour of ministerial discourse. But at this cry of rage and despair sent forth against Wealth itself, by the unfortunate whom it enveloped, wrapped up, drowned in floods of gold, and who struggled against its power, calling for help from the bottom of his Pactolus, the whole Chamber rose with warm applause, with hands held out, as if to give the unfortunate Nabob those evidences of esteem for which he showed himself so eager, and at the same time

to save him from shipwreck. Jansoulet felt this, and warmed by the sympathy, he resumed with his head high, and his countenance full of confidence—

“You have been told, gentlemen, that I was not worthy of a seat among you. And he who has said it, was the last from whom I should have expected those words, for he alone knows the sorrowful secret of my life; he alone could speak for me, could justify me and convince you. He has not done so. *Eh bien!* I must do it myself, however much it may cost me. Outrageously calumniated before the entire country, I owe to myself, I owe to my children, this public justification of my name, and I have decided to make it—”

“By a sudden movement he turned towards the gallery from which his enemy watched him, and all at once stopped short full of consternation. There, exactly in face of him, behind the little head, pale and full of hate, of the baroness,—his mother—his mother whom he believed to be two hundred leagues distant from that storm,—gazed at him, leaning upon the wall, turning towards him her divine countenance, all wet with tears, but proud and beaming notwithstanding, over the success of her Bernard. For it was the true success of sincere and truly human emotion which a few words might turn into triumph. ‘Go on! go on!’ was called out to him from every side of the Chamber to reassure him—to encourage him. But Jansoulet said not a word. He had, however, very little to say to complete his defence. ‘Slander has wilfully confounded two names; I am called Bernard Jansoulet, the other was called Louis.’ Not a word more. But it was too much in presence of the mother, who up to this time was ignorant of the dishonour of her eldest son. It was too much for family respect and union. He seemed to hear the voice of his old father, ‘I am dying of shame, my child.’ Would not she too die of shame if he spoke? He cast a sublime glance of renunciation towards that maternal smile, then with a dull voice and gesture of discouragement—

“‘Pardon me, gentlemen; this explanation is beyond my strength. Command an inquest into my life,

which is open to all, and full in the light, so that every one can interpret all its acts. I swear to you that you will find nothing there to prevent me taking my place among the representatives of my country.'

"The astonishment, the disenchantment were immense before that defeat which seemed to all the sudden breaking down of a great effrontery. There was a moment of agitation among the benches, then the tumult of the vote, which the Nabob watched under the doubtful daylight from the windows, as the condemned contemplates from the scaffold the murmuring crowd. Then after that pause, a century long, which precedes a supreme moment, the president pronounced in the great silence, with the utmost simplicity—

"'The election of M. Bernard Jansoulet is annulled.' Never was a man's life cut in twain with less solemnity or trouble."

This is the climax of the story. How the old mother divines what a sacrifice has been made for her, and half suffocated with tears and trouble, cries aloud to his enemies who will not listen, "J'avais deux fils, Monsieur—deux fils, Monsieur;" and how, when all is over, the homely hero lays his great, rough, middle-aged head upon her aged shoulder, and with his big frame shaken by sobs, calls her name in the voice of his childhood, the *patois* so long forgotten,—it is needless to tell. There is a temporary rally, when Paul de Géry, the one devoted friend who never forsakes the Nabob, returns from Tunis with a remnant of his fortune saved from the machinations which have destroyed him; but the Nabob's vain, tender, kind, and honest heart is broken. Never was there a hero less refined, less ideal, nor one who more entirely gets hold of our sympathies. Even after this great scene, his old faith in his fellow-creatures, and longing for the applause which had been so riotous at first, tempts him out again into the world, and

to the final blow; but Jansoulet is never less nor more than himself, and the treacherous public keeps to its cruel verdict. The tragedy is not noble, it is not sublime on one side or the other, but yet it is heart-rending in its pathos and force of indignant reality.

We are sorry not to be able to quote the story of the *Caisse Territoriale*, which events of the present day make but too painfully suggestive. That utterly bankrupt concern is, however, in its complete dishonesty, honester than some of the gigantic swindles nearer home, which did not betray their failure by any such palpable means. The cashier, who, shut up in his office, employs himself in making shirt-fronts and collars of paper, the clerk who makes nets for the shops, and the solemn Swiss Passajon who cooks his onions in the great empty office—all these industries are creditable indeed, in comparison with the occupations of much greater mercantile authorities. The official above named who tells the story of the great swindle, and who, after it has been resuscitated by the Nabob's money, extends his observations into the high life below stairs—or rather very much above stairs—of Parisian servants' parties, is one of M. Daudet's most palpable copies from Dickens. We cannot congratulate him upon the success of his borrowing. Passajon is something of a bore, with none of the wit of Sam Weller; and though his great entertainment does more to help on the story, yet it is not, in itself, at all equal to the famous supper with the leg of mutton and trimmings which has furnished the model. Very Dickensish, too, is the picture, pretty enough in itself, of the Joyeuse family,—gushing and fond and mutually devoted; but a very strange importation into Paris, notwithstanding the local

colour. This too evident Anglicanism is a real *faute*, like one of grammar or spelling; but is evidently held by the author, with innocent vainglory, to be one of the best things in the book, so tenderly does he linger upon it, and the two virtuous and tranquil love-stories, coming to the most approved and happy end, which modify the tragedy. There are many other admirable sketches which our space forbids us to dwell on. That of the Duc de Morny is not, as we have already said, calculated to blacken the reputation of that strange charlatan statesman. It is no posthumous stab, but a lively and interesting picture, presenting to us the "Richelieu-Brummel" under an aspect more favourable than any other contemporary portrait. He is like nothing so much (and probably he himself would not have disliked the comparison) as the Buckingham of Sir Walter Scott, mixing *chiffons* and diplomacy with impartial zeal, yet retaining a faint glow of the chivalrous and romantic through all. This same lost light of something heroic, even though it is a heroism not without reminiscences of the theatre—throws a gleam of interest essentially French upon the old beau Monpavon, which surprises us in the midst of his artificial being. Even his pagan sacrifice to the manes of his old comrade and leader is artificial—yet amid the mock-heroic there is still a glimmer of the true.

We are by no means sure that we have not mistaken the succession of M. Daudet's novels by placing the 'Nabab' before 'Jack;' but if so, the mistake is unimportant. 'Jack' is by much the longest, and it is also the saddest of the three. A character more touching, a story more melancholy, is seldom placed before the sympathetic

reader; and to the numerous class which dislikes in fiction the invasions of that distress which we are too well acquainted with in real life, it will always be a book too sad to be agreeable. But the sadness of such a story is inevitable, and fiction will have lost its highest development when it is prevented from treading this path of suffering, and following, like tragedy, the fated steps of the child of sorrow to the only end which is possible. The story of 'Jack,' however, is not an unmitigated record of woe. Like the 'Nabab,' though in a very different way, the hands of the poor young hero are clean, and his heart pure; but the shadow of sin and shame is upon him, and all his own exertions are insufficient to free him from its burden and punishment.

Jack is introduced to the reader in a scene which gives in brief the whole plan of his story. "Par un k, monsieur le supérieur, par un k. Le nom se écrit et se prononce à l'Anglaise—comme ceci, Djack. Le parrain de l'enfant était Anglais, major-général dans l'armée des Indes—Lord Peambock—vous connaissez peut-être." It is a lady, a young mother, "une élégante personne d'une mise irréprochable, bien au goût du jour et de la saison," who has come to enter the child as a pupil, "chez les pères," in the most fashionable educational institution in Paris, and who thus explains the name of the little boy of eight, in a Highland costume, who clings to her in terror of being left behind. Her exuberance of words, which hides a certain embarrassment, her hesitation about his surname, and production of a card inscribed "Ida de Barancy," alarms the head of the establishment, who elicits at length a confession that the child has neither name nor father; and that "Madame la Com-

tesse Ida de Barancy était une comtesse pour rire." The priest refuses the poor little pupil, in whose absence this disclosure has taken place; and when Jack is brought back, he is, contrary to all his fears, carried off again by his mother, trembling and happy at the escape he has made, but hearing with childish wonder the "*Pauvre enfant, pauvre enfant!*" of the firm but pitying Jesuit. Thus his rejection by the respectable and blameless, his condition of pariah outside of all laws and sympathies, are at once indicated. It is the key-note boldly struck of all that follows. Poor little Jack, outgrowing his kilt, growing long and too intelligent, but always tender and docile, goes back to the luxurious, extravagant little house in which his mother is established. The child knows and suspects no harm—too young to do anything but admire and worship the beautiful mother who always loves and pets him, whatever her other habits may be—and her sobs and tears as they return in their luxurious carriage fill him with dismay. "*Il se sentait vaguement coupable, ce cher petit; mais au fond de cette tristesse il y avait aussi la grande joie de n'être pas entré à la pension.*" But soon the tears and sobs come to an end, the reign of folly recommences, and Ida de Barancy goes off to a masked ball, leaving her child pondering the incomprehensible words "*pauvre enfant,*" and hearing a discussion, which he cannot understand, yet which alarms him vaguely, going on among the servants about himself and his future career.

Poor little Jack! the lonely child, innocent in an atmosphere of shame, adoring the foolish, childish, yet soft-hearted and tender mother, who, amid shame and sin, is still his mother, and adores him as much as

her superficial nature can, makes the most pitiful picture. There is no place in the world for this innocence which is the offspring of corruption. We cannot for a moment imagine that such a subject would have been chosen by an English writer. A combination of circumstances so hopeless demands courage greater than belongs to insular fiction; and our respect for our audience makes it a kind of crime to throw light upon the secrets of a life lived in defiance of all laws, and under the universal ban. But French art is impartial, and considers the dramatic capabilities of a subject before everything. No reader, however, need fear a sublime Traviata, an interesting Dame aux Camelias from the hands of M. Daudet. The partial innocence of extreme folly—of which we may suppose that it is scarcely capable of understanding its own criminality—is the prominent quality in Jack's mother. The poor little fool and *parvenue* is as frivolous as a butterfly, and has no capability of passion in her. The Gymnase Moronval, to which humble establishment the poor little hero is finally consigned, brings the little sham *comtesse* with all her luxuries into contact with a shabby and hungry community of would-be artists and intellectualists, *Ratés*, who are described at some length, and whose threadbare society again reminds us strongly of Dickens. "*Moronval appela autour de lui ses anciennes connaissances de café, un médecin sans diplôme, un poète sans éditeur, un chanteur sans engagement, des déclassés, des fruits sec, des ratés, tous enrégés comme lui contre la société que ne voulait pas de leur talents.*" These teachers out at elbows form the staff of a Dotheboys Hall much less humble than the original, and chiefly consisting of poor little pupils from the tropics, *petit pays*

chaud,—Moronval himself being a colonial mulatto from Guadaloupe. The *poète sans éditeur*—a heartless pedant, with a Vicomte's title and a Byronic exterior—becomes the god of Jack's mother and his own evil fate. M. Daudet has taken great pains in the portraiture of this would-be splendid and intolerable personage, who, having fallen heir at length to a little money, retires with the companion he has chosen to a cottage in the country, which he has elaborately prepared as the type of poetical retirement and seclusion, inscribing pompously over its doorway, *Parva domus, magna quies*. It is needless to say that the quiet soon becomes intolerable to this strange pair, who bore each other to distraction; though the poor little woman—who has all the care of a legitimate wife, without any credit or consolation, and whose silly kindness is always amiable, like a Ruth Pinch in equivocal circumstances—makes a heroic effort to cheer her lord and master by calling the old coterie round them; when, by dint of perpetual visitors from Paris, all ready to admire and applaud the poetical host, whose bust and portraits adorn every room, the *magna quies* becomes tolerable.

Jack runs away from his school, and seeks his mother in this poetical retreat, walking from Paris through the darkness of a long distracting night, which would have been a very touching incident if David Copperfield had not made a similar journey before him. But Copperfield was not in himself so interesting or pathetic a figure as Jack, the poor little outcast, without a friend in the world except the equally trembling and helpless woman, whose very love never brings him anything but evil; and his utter devotion to his mother, and the tender docility with which he obeys her weeping recommendations, sub-

duing all rebellion the moment she appeals to him, is very tenderly and beautifully touched with a pathos which is peculiarly French. The scene in which D'Argenton and his strolling coterie settle the question of Jack's future life, and the child's trembling spectatorship and silent despair while his destiny is thus being decided, are very effective and powerful. Labassindre, the basso, who is always trying his voice,—“pour constater tout au fond de son clavier souterrain la présence d'un certain *ut* d'en bas, dont il était très fier et toujours inquiet,”—has been a workman, a *mécanicien* in some great iron-works on the Loire, and it is he who suggests to the would-be poet, the harsh stepfather, all the harsher that he has no legal right to the name, a way of getting rid of the child whom he hates and is jealous of, by making a workman of him in this foundry, under the auspices of the singer's brother, a foreman there. The poor little foolish mother weeps and protests, yet is half persuaded by the vapouring periods of the singer, who declares the *ouvrier* to be now the master of the world. When Jack, vaguely conscious of a doom to be pronounced, is called in to be informed of it, the shabby company are gathered round the table, while his mother stands with her back to him gazing out from the window, and hiding her trouble and her tears.

“‘You understand, Jack,’ resumed D'Argenton, his eyes shining, his arm stretched out, ‘in four years you may be a good workman,—that is to say, the best, the most noble thing on this enslaved earth. In four years you will be that holy thing, a good workman.’

“He had indeed heard very distinctly ‘a good workman,’ only he did not understand,—he wondered. At Paris sometimes the child had seen this class of men. There were some who lived in the passage des Douze-Maisons, and

near the *pension* itself was a manufactory of lamps, from which he liked to watch the people streaming out, when they left off work about six o'clock, a troop of men in blouses, all stained with oil, their hands rough, black, deformed with work. The idea that he must wear a blouse struck him in the first place. He recalled the tone of disdain with which his mother had said, 'They are work-people, men in blouses,'—the care with which she avoided in the street all contact with their soiled clothes. All the fine speeches of Labassindre upon work, and the influence of the workman on the nineteenth century, were also in his recollection, it is true. But what moved him most was the thought that he must go away;—leave the woods, of which, where he stood, he could see the green tree-tops—the house of Rivals, and his mother,—his mother whom he had regained with such difficulty, and whom he loved so much.

"What was the matter with her, that she should stand always at that window detached from everything that was going on around? However, for the moment she had lost her look of still indifference. Was it something sad that she saw outside, in the country, on the horizon where the daylight always died away, and where so many dreams, illusions, tendernesses, ardours disappeared also?

"'Must I go away, then?' asked the child in a suffocated voice, almost mechanically, as if he allowed his thought to speak, the sole thought that was in him. At this simple question the members of the tribunal looked at each other, with a smile of pity; but from the window there came a great sob."

There is, however, no appeal from this terrible decision—the indignant remonstrance attempted by Jack's sole friend, the old country doctor, Rivals, a choleric but warm-hearted old man, ending only in a desperate quarrel. Jack's own impulse of childish desperation is subdued by his mother, who, after trying to console him with vague parrot repetitions of the arguments with which her feeble intelligence

has been silenced,—"*Vous savez bien que le tour de l'ouvrier est venu maintenant; la bourgeoisie a fait son temps, la noblesse aussi,*"—at last touches the true note:

"'We have nothing of our own, my poor child; we depend absolutely on—on him. . . . Ah, if I could go in your place to Indret! Think that it is a trade you will have in your hands. Will you not be proud to have no more need of any one, to gain your own bread, to be your own master?'

"By the glance that came into the child's eyes she saw that she had found the right means to move him; and in a low tone, in the caressing and wooing voice which is proper to mothers, she murmured, 'Do it for me, Jack, will you? Make yourself able to gain your own living quickly. Who knows but that I, some day, may be obliged to have recourse to thee as to my sole support, my only friend?'

The great foundry on the Loire, into which the poor little delicate child, with all his refined instincts and prejudices, is now swept, furnishes us with a companion picture, on a larger scale, to the *usine* of Fromont. The lurid glare of the furnaces—the pale gleam of the river, covered with boats, lined with its files of great poplars—the noise, the tumult, the life of mere labour, without care or beauty—the evening gossip of the rough-voiced men, the scarcely less loud women, eating their bare unattractive meals in the scorched bits of garden attached to their monotonous little houses,—all this is set before us with graphic power; and a little group of work-people grow out of the haze, which, from the eyes of poor little Jack, so out of place, so silent and pathetic, amid these strange surroundings, communicates itself to the reader. The family of Roudic, however, is quite episodic, and may be passed over without further note, though it involves a very tragic passage in the

life of poor Jack, who is accused of stealing a sum of money of which he knows nothing, in consequence of his first debauch—a day and night of terrible excitement and misery, in which the author spares his poor young hero none of the miserable details of a wild drinking-bout under the lowest conditions. Jack, however, is at last cleared triumphantly of this short imputation on his honour, and progresses into as good a workman as his delicate constitution permits. Then comes a still more terrible episode. The poor Roudic, his host and patron at the foundry, advises him to become a stoker, as a means of making a little money. “Si la chambre de chauffe ne te fait pas peur tu pourrais tenter le coup,” says this rough friend. “Tu gagnerais six francs par jour en faisant le tour du monde, logé, nourri, chauffé — Ah, dam ! oui, dam ! chauffé. Le métier est rude, mais ou en revient, puisque je l’ai fait deux ans, et que me voilà.”

Poor Jack succumbs to the temptations of this calling, and falls into the lowest depths. Too young, too badly trained to be able to resist the influences round him, he loses the last ghost of the early refinement which had been natural to him, and adapts himself to his terrible work. The moral of this downfall is both painful and pathetic: “Il commençait un rêve fou d’ivresse et de torture qui devait durer trois ans.” He went round the world, by lovely coasts, into beautiful places; but, always under the fatal dog-star of that blazing hole, no skies were blue, no climate sweet for Jack. The more delightful the climate, the more terrible was the stoking-room.

At last he is delivered from this terrible existence by an accident, by the loss of the ship, from which he escapes lame and suffering. His

mother has heard some vague news of the loss of the *Cydnus*, when Jack appears, no longer the gentle boy, but a worn and gaunt working man, with hoarse voice and rude manners, with *habitudes de cabaret*, which, after her first joy in regaining him, make her blush,—his appearance and bearing altogether being now those of a lower class than any which, even in her degradation, she has ever known. At last she is permitted by D’Argenton, now established in Paris as manager of an unsuccessful paper, chiefly instituted by money which has been left to poor Jack, but which he knows nothing of, to send him to Les Aulnettes, the *parva domus* from which they were both so glad to flee. Les Aulnettes means peace and happiness to the broken youth, who encounters the good old doctor, his only friend, and the little Cecile, his infant companion, now a beautiful girl who has never forgotten him. The idyl is pure and beautiful, but brief. The *magna quies* which had not existed for D’Argenton descends with the sweetness of heaven upon the child of shame, the poor young soul repentant of all his misfortunes, from whom the soil of evil days drops away in the tender tranquillity. And all is going to be well with Jack. Dr Rivals sets him to work to enable him to pass the examinations in medicine, which will fit Jack to be his own successor—work which can be carried on along with his own work of engineering when he resumes that; and telling him the story of Cecile, which is almost as painful as his own, allows the two to be betrothed. But Jack is not born to end happily. The tragedy of expiation must be carried out to its end. When all is going well with him—his days employed in his trade, his nights in study, his Sundays in happiness at Étioilles with Cecile—sud-

denly his mother fulfils her own prevision, and, after a quarrel with D'Argenton, throws herself upon his care. Jack responds with joy to the appeal; but alas! his mother, whom he adores, is no bird to sing in a garret, and has never been used to the privations, the self-denial, the gravity of that life in which her son finds health and power. When the first moment of satisfaction is over, he has a hard task to keep her amused—to keep her contented. She is as foolish and frivolous in advanced life as in her youth; and at last, after straining Jack's patience to the utmost, and swearing to remain with him for ever, she leaves him without warning to return to her tyrant, and all the shames of the past. There now remains only Cecile; and she, by a caprice—by a mistaken scruple, which the reader resents almost with bitterness—turns from him also; and the poor fellow, worn out by work, weakness, and distress, with the seeds of disease sown in him during his terrible probation, sinks under all these blows at last.

The *dénouement* is wrought out with much pathos and force, but, as we have said, the reader resents the expedient by which poor Jack's heart and strength are finally broken. It is beyond the range of legitimate art, which cannot be allowed to resort to extravagant means in order to bring about a heartrending conclusion, however necessary it may be to the tragical intention of the drama. Cecile, the sweet and peaceful and sensible French girl of the earlier chapters, could never have committed so cruel and so obstinate a folly; and even poor Jack might have been delivered, we feel, otherwise than by the hand of death. When we say this, not without a lingering anger, we give the highest testimonial that an author can wish—for his hero is not one whose fate

we can follow with indifference, or from whose end we can turn without that choking sensation of tears suppressed which only genuine emotion can produce. He grows upon us through the two volumes—so much more space than a French novelist generally gives himself—with an increasing attraction; grows up—and this of itself is a fine effort of art—naturally, from his very infancy, before our eyes. We see the glimmering of a noble nature in him through all the evils which are not of his doing. We watch the fatal power which overshadows him, the curse of shame and sin from which even his innocence cannot get him freed, and accompany the struggle with interest in which a pang of sympathy is involved. He, poor young fellow, with scarcely a friend, is *aux prises* with all the powers of evil—with cruelty, folly, error, a broken heart. Perhaps it could not be possible that he should escape and be happy like the ordinary subject of romance; but, with the sob in our throat, we are angry, and resent the last blow. M. Daudet could not ask for higher applause.

The chief figures that surround this pathetic image of injured youth and goodness are equally true and powerful. The character of the mother Ida, or Charlotte, as she is called by D'Argenton, is sustained with wonderful force. Always frivolous, facile, good-hearted—full of love in her way, yet unconsciously cruel—terrible in the inconsequent prattlings by which, while trying to delude even her son as to her past, she betrays herself—she goes on from youth to age, unimproving, unimprovable, the same creature; faithful, affectionate, and patient, yet loveless, heartless, and unfeeling—all in a breath. The words are too harsh for such a light and soulless being. She is her

child's curse and his ruin, yet his inspiration, his first and last thought. The conjunction is terrible, and if the appalling lesson which is taught could reach those who might profit by it, there would be an excellent reason for thus using the tragic gift of a prophet. But to the regions in which dwell the *Ida de Barancys* of life, what moralist is likely to reach? And we might ask, why should our souls be harrowed by such a combination? Perhaps, however, there never has existed on earth a state of morals in which this combination might not occur, and therefore it cannot be called unjustifiable in art.

We have altogether omitted, carried away by the grave strain of the tale, to notice another figure, which is entirely Dickensish. The wandering pedlar *Belisaire*, with his good heart and his bad feet,—his perpetual longing for a pair of shoes, *sur mesure*, and his excellent wife and happy wedding and bliss in his garret, and *le camarade* whom to find is the necessary condition of his marriage, are all

Dickens done into French, and therefore, with a touch of piquancy in the differences of intonation. The picture is pretty enough; but all M. Daudet's finer effects are from the style which is his own, which is borrowed from nobody.

Here, then, are three French novels which eschew no questions of bitter and painful life, which recognise the misery of the *mœurs contemporaines* they illustrate, and their dark abysses of evil—the wind which they sow, and the whirlwind which they reap—yet which are neither foul nor sentimental, but manly and true. The breadth and honesty and sound nature in them may lack the so-called refinements of analysis which some other noted writers have turned to such evil purpose. But we know no French novelist in whom the English reader will find so little to object to, or whose pictures of his native country will yield a better and higher interest, a more broad understanding of the life of France as it is—so like, yet so unlike, all that we experience and know.

THE AFFGHAN WAR AND ITS AUTHORS.

THOSE who wish to get at the bottom of the Affghan difficulty, and to judge for themselves who is really responsible for the war, will do well to begin their study of the Blue-books at page 102 of the "Correspondence respecting the Relations between the British Government and that of Affghanistan since the accession of Ameer Shere Ali Khan." They will there find the following telegram, which speaks for itself, without any need for comment of ours to explain its meaning:—

TELEGRAM NO. 1, 414 P, DATED
27TH JUNE 1873.

"From [Northbrook] Viceroy, Simla,
to [Argyll] Secretary of State,
London.

"Despatch goes by next mail, summing up Central Asian correspondence with Russia in conciliatory spirit, in accord with Gladstone's speech on Eastwick's motion."

Our readers may be pardoned for thinking that we are trying to palm off a *canard* upon them; but if they turn to the Blue-book at the page we have indicated, they may read the despatch for themselves. And we do not hesitate to say that there is no document in the Blue-book which throws more light upon Lord Northbrook's Affghan policy, or which better explains the position that he took up upon the Central Asian question, than this frank and confidential communication. No clearer proof could be adduced that Lord Northbrook, during his viceroyalty, consulted the views of the Liberal party, rather than the critical condition into which our alliance with Cabul was then drifting. The despatch shows, too, that as early as 1873 Mr Glad-

stone's Government had begun to play the game of Russia; and that Lord Northbrook was shaping his course not so much by the actual events that were transpiring around him, as to support the views put forward by his chief in Parliament. Is it at all surprising, then, that a policy which had for its object to keep "in accord with Gladstone's speeches" should result in trouble and war? Can imagination conceive what would have been the consequences to our Eastern empire had its foreign policy continued to be "in accord with Gladstone's speeches" during the two years that succeeded Lord Northbrook's retirement from office? In this respect, at least, Lord Lytton may be charged with having initiated a "departure" from his predecessor's policy; and we question if the files of the Calcutta Secretariat, before or since Lord Northbrook's time, can show another instance of subserviency to party requirements worthy of being put parallel to the telegram we have quoted above. It is a fitting sequel to this incident that the Liberal Cabinet apparently had not the moral courage to communicate the despatch "summing up the Central Asian correspondence with Russia in conciliatory spirit, in accord with Gladstone's speech," to the St Petersburg Government, although the Viceroy, in Council, had strongly urged, in the interests of peace, "that it should be laid before the Czar's ministers."

The flood of eloquence which the ex-Premier has poured upon the public since he went out of office, has naturally washed away all recollections of his speech on Mr Eastwick's motion; and to show the

full significance of Lord Northbrook's telegram, we shall recall the gist of what Mr Gladstone said on that occasion. He had then, as he fancied, reached a definite understanding with Russia about Central Asian affairs. Prince Gortschakoff had accepted a definite boundary of the Ameer's dominions, and had assured us that Affghanistan lay "outside Russia's sphere of action;" but he had also assumed an obligation on the part of England "to maintain Shere Ali's peaceful attitude, and to restrain him from all measures of aggression or further conquest." This was no slight responsibility, considering the difficulties that lay in the way of our accepting it; and Mr Gladstone took the opportunity of assuring the country that "the engagement referred solely to the moral influence possessed by England and Russia in the East—Russia engaging to abstain from any attempt to exercise it in Affghanistan, and England engaging to exercise it for a pacific purpose." The only meaning that could be extracted from this was, that we meant to limit our interest in the Ameer as much as possible to giving him good advice, but that if he got into difficulties he would have to bear the burden himself; and so Mr Gladstone's speech was interpreted, both in India and in Russia. This was the speech in accord with which Lord Northbrook and his Council summed up the Central Asian correspondence; and we are justified in saying that its effects were speedily visible in the unsettled state of Shere Ali's feelings, and in his desire for some more definite guarantee for his security than the "moral influence" of which Mr Gladstone had made so much.

It is round Lord Northbrook's ad-

ministration that the whole interest of the Blue-books centres; and as his lordship has both the power and the disposition to put his own version of his proceedings before the public, we need have no hesitation in briefly recapitulating them as they are presented to us in the official documents. It was quite natural that the late Viceroy should feel it necessary to wash his hands in innocency as soon as the official accounts of his dealings with the Ameer were made public; but we see no reason that he had to fling the slops into his successor's face. No one knows so well as Lord Northbrook the difficulties which the Government of India has had to contend with in managing its refractory ally; and yet he has stood forth as its severest critic. With what justice he may occupy this position we trust to show in the course of this article; but it will be evident to all that he has been eminently successful in making the tone of his criticism like his Central Asian despatch, in accord with Mr Gladstone's speeches.

The Blue-books probably will not add much to the information of our readers, before whom we had already placed* all the points that bear upon the recent situation. They supply us, however, with an authoritative corroboration of several of the more important facts connected with present Affghan negotiations, to which, on a former occasion, we were only justified in making a bare allusion. Keeping in view the narrative which we have already given of the relations of the Government of India with the Cabul Durbar, we shall be able, on the present occasion, to confine our attention to some of the more controverted points of our Affghan negotiations, especially to those

* See article "India and Affghanistan," Blackwood's Magazine, November 1878.
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upon which it has been sought to found a charge of aggression and hostility against her Majesty's present advisers.

Lord Northbrook's dealings with the Ameer have been very tersely summed up in a single paragraph (No. 9) of Lord Cranbrook's despatch of 18th November last; and as that paragraph contains the chief issues upon which discussion of the question has been made to hinge, we cannot do better than quote it at length:—

“Finding that the object of the Ameer was to ascertain definitely how far he might rely on the help of the British Government if his territories were threatened by Russia, Lord Northbrook's Government was prepared to assure him that, under certain conditions, the Government of India would assist him to repel unprovoked aggression. But her Majesty's Government at home did not share his Highness's apprehension, and the Viceroy ultimately informed the Ameer that the discussion of the question would be postponed to a more convenient season. The effect of this announcement on his Highness, although conveyed in conciliatory language, was not favourable; the policy which dictated it was unintelligible to his mind, and he received it with feelings of chagrin and disappointment. His reply to Lord Northbrook's communication was couched in terms of ill-disguised sarcasm; he took no notice of the Viceroy's proposal to depute a British officer to examine the northern frontier of Affghanistan; he subsequently refused permission to Sir Douglas Forsyth to return from Kashgar to India through Cabul; he left untouched a gift of money lodged to his credit by the Indian Government, and generally assumed towards it an attitude of sullen reserve.”

That this paragraph furnishes a correct account of the issue of the negotiations between Lord Northbrook and the Ameer we shall readily show by a few references to the Blue-books, supported by the

late Viceroy's own explanations. We must premise, however, that to interpret the despatches in the Blue-book aright, we must carefully take into account, not merely the Russian movements in High Asia, but the development of the difficulty in Europe between the Czar and the Porte, as well as the danger which for some time existed of Great Britain being dragged into the quarrel. Any criticism which fails to include these points in its consideration must of necessity be one-sided and imperfect.

When Lord Northbrook entered office in India, it was admitted that our relations with Shere Ali and his country were in a fairly satisfactory condition. The only difference between us turned on the succession to the Cabul *musnud*; and at that time there was no necessity for pressing that to a settlement. Discomposed by the rapidity of the Russian advance, and naturally dreading that Affghanistan would share the fate of the Turkistan Khanates, the Ameer began to nervously seek reassurances from the Indian Government. For this he certainly was not to blame. He had noted how fallacious the pledges which Russia had given about the Khivan expedition had proved to be, and the difficulties which the St Petersburg Government seemed disposed to raise about his own frontier boundary were to him a justifiable source of anxiety. At the same time we must point out that the assurances which Russia was offering, however gratifying to the Liberal Government, were not such as could have altogether allayed the Ameer's anxiety. Experience had taught Shere Ali that all Viceroys were not of the same way of thinking as the friend whom he had just lost; and he had good reason to dread the revival of the “Masterly In-

activity" *régime* under the new Indian ruler. It was at this time that Lord Northbrook summed up the Central Asian question "in accord with Gladstone's speech,"—not, in our opinion, the course that was most calculated to give confidence to our ally. Nor was a despatch that was confessedly summed up to support Mr Gladstone's utterances in the House, and not to place the real condition of affairs before the Cabinet, likely to enable the Home Government to see its way clearly. Soon after, the following telegrams were exchanged between India and England:—

"Telegram from Viceroy to Secretary of State.

"SIMLA, dated July 24, 1873.

"Ameer of Cabul alarmed at Russian progress, dissatisfied with general assurance, and anxious to know definitely how far he may rely on our help if invaded. I propose assuring him that if he unreservedly accepts and acts on our advice in all external relations, we will help him with money, arms, and troops, if necessary, to expel unprovoked invasion. We to be the judge of the necessity. Answer by telegraph quickly."

"Telegram from Secretary of State to the Viceroy.

"INDIA OFFICE, dated 26th July 1873.

"Cabinet thinks you should inform Ameer that we do not at all share his alarm, and consider there is no cause for it; but you may assure him we shall maintain our settled policy in favour of Affghanistan if he abides by our advice in external affairs."

It is obvious that an excellent chance of placing our relations with Shere Ali upon a firm basis was lost on this occasion, and that the hesitating and uncertain nature of the assurance which was then offered to the Ameer seriously shook his faith in British support. Our "settled policy" had never been so clearly

defined, or, indeed, so disinterested, that Shere Ali could draw much comfort from the Duke of Argyll's assurance. But we may question whether the Cabinet at home sufficiently realised the fears which were pressing upon the Ameer; for the information which had been laid before it had been summed up not so much in accordance with affairs in Central Asia as "in accord with Gladstone's speech." At all events, between the two Governments Shere Ali's representations met with no satisfactory response; and from this time we are justified in dating those rancorous feelings which, fostered by foreign influence and by the political uncertainties arising out of the Russo-Turkish war, finally committed him to a course of hostility against the Viceregal Government, to whose friendship and alliance he had solemnly pledged himself at the Umballa Conference. From the date of his earlier intercourse with Lord Northbrook, the Ameer appears to have treated his communications with scanty respect, which, in the end, gave way to irony and insult. In the spring of 1873, when the Government of India proposed to send a present of 5000 Enfield rifles to the Ameer, his Highness rejected the gift as insufficient, in terms of which the Government of India was, we think, bound to take notice:—

"'No doubt,' said his Highness to the Cabul agent, 'the kingdom which God has given me should be thankful to the British Government for their sympathy and cordiality; but it is as clear as daylight that both the nobles and common people of Affghanistan are armed with guns, and always accustomed to the use of rifles. . . . His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General of India has expressed his wish to send 5000 Enfield rifles. This offer, though it is a proof of the kindness and favourable consideration of the British Government, will not

meet the requirements of the army of this kingdom; consequently, as intimated before, it is necessary that small-arms to the number of 15,000 three-grooved rifles and 5000 Snider guns should be procured at any price at which it may be possible to procure them."

We must speak of the tone of a translated document with a certain amount of caution; but if the original Persian at all bears out the offensive tenor of the remarks we have just quoted, it was high time for Lord Northbrook to have vindicated the dignity of the Government of India. And what aggravates both the Ameer's impertinence and the Viceroy's obtuseness is the fact that these utterances sprang from no hasty outburst of temper, to be recalled as soon as sober judgment returned, but were deliberately spoken with the intention that they should be reported to the Viceroy, for the Cabul agent was careful to read over his report of the conversation to the Ameer before despatching it. Those who do not know the part which forms of address occupy in Eastern diplomacy will have some difficulty in realising the false position in which a communication of this character placed the Government of India; but we venture to say that no affront of so flagrant a kind had hitherto been pocketed by the Calcutta Foreign Office.

This was not an auspicious prelude to the interviews which took place between Lord Northbrook and the Ameer's envoy, Syud Noor Mohammed in the months of July and August 1873. The Ameer's anxiety for some more definite assurance than the "moral influence" which we professed to exercise in his councils had been gaining in intensity as the wave of Russian aggression swept still closer to his border. He had already seen one

understanding between Russia and Britain violated in the Khivan expedition, and no attempt made to call the aggressor to account; and the British Government might allow his own dominions to be sacrificed next, rather than risk a quarrel with Russia on the subject. There was a confident belief in Affghanistan in the spring of 1873 that the Russians would be in possession of Merv before twelve months were over. It was unquestionably the interest of the Ameer to make fast by our friendship, just as much as it was ours to secure his alliance and to guarantee him our support. Under such circumstances, for negotiations to fail so signally as did those of Lord Northbrook with Syud Noor Mohammed, implies, to say the least, an unfortunate want of statesmanship upon our side.

The Affghan envoy came to Simla, and in answer to Lord Northbrook's assurances of the satisfactory understanding which had been arrived at between Russia and England regarding the integrity of Affghanistan, spoke his mind very frankly.

"The rapid advances made by the Russians in Central Asia had," he said, "aroused the gravest apprehensions in the minds of the people of Affghanistan. Whatever specific assurances the Russians might give, and however often these might be repeated, the people of Affghanistan could place no confidence in them, and would never rest satisfied unless they were assured of the aid of the British Government."

But it was no part of Lord Northbrook's policy, or of his instructions from the Duke of Argyll, to give any such assurance. On the contrary, the blunt appeals of the envoy for some tangible guarantee were met by cold evasions. With regard to the envoy's direct request for assistance to enable him to strengthen his northern frontier

so that he and his people might rest in security, Lord Northbrook's response was such as might well have overcome the patience of even a meeker ruler than the Ameer of Affghanistan. Lord Mayo had given Shere Ali a written guarantee that the Government of India would "endeavour from time to time, by such means as circumstances might require, to strengthen the Government of his Highness." Lord Northbrook admitted the promise, but qualified it by saying that the "British Government must be judges of the propriety of any request preferred by the Ameer." No doubt the British Government would, under all circumstances, be the judges; but Lord Northbrook contrived to put the matter so that the Ameer caught alarm lest the generous policy which Lord Mayo had pursued should relapse into the old selfish attitude which the Government of India had taken up towards him in the days of "Masterly Inactivity." All the assurance that the envoy could extract from the Government of India was the Viceroy's personal pledge that "if, in the event of any aggression from without, British influence were invoked, and failed by negotiation to effect a satisfactory settlement, *it was probable* that the British Government would afford the Ameer material assistance in repelling an invader, but that such assistance would be conditional on the Ameer following the advice of the British Government, and having himself abstained from aggression." We italicise this very conditional assurance, to show how hypothetical, and how different from Lord Mayo's frank language, was the promise now held out to the Ameer. To every request preferred by the envoy—most of them, in our opinion, just to the Ameer and prudent for ourselves—Lord North-

brook returned a stiff refusal. The envoy asked that England should specifically declare that any Power invading Affghanistan should be treated as an enemy. This was refused as "causing needless irritation." He then "pressed that the contingency of aggression by Russia should be specifically mentioned in writing to the Ameer." To this Lord Northbrook replied—and we call particular attention to his response—"that setting aside the inexpediency of causing needless irritation to a friendly Power by such specific mention, the suggestion was one that could not be adopted, inasmuch as it implied an admission of the probability of such a contingency arising, which the British Government are not prepared to admit in the face of the repeated assurances given by Russia." Lord Northbrook, it will be seen, summed up the Simla negotiations, as he had already summed up his despatch, in a conciliatory spirit to Russia, in accord with Mr Gladstone's speeches. But what a failure of common tact, not to say British statesmanship, was here! It could have entailed no great outlay of diplomatic ingenuity, and certainly no sacrifice of honesty, to have satisfied the Ameer without reflecting upon Russia's fidelity to her engagements—of which despatches almost contemporary show Lord Northbrook's Government to have been very far from being assured. The most lenient view that we can take of the Simla negotiations is, that they were sadly bungled; and it is from this period that we must date the complete loss of that influence with the Ameer which Lord Mayo had gained for the Government of India, and which Lord Northbrook now sacrificed to conciliate Russia, and to keep his policy in accord with Mr Gladstone's harangues.

This mismanaged interview speedily bore fruit, although, luckily both for Lord Northbrook and for India, it did not fall to his lordship's lot to gather it. The subsequent communications from the Ameer which appear in the Blue-books, are couched in a tone of covert hostility, which frequently breaks out into open sarcasm. The Viceroy had already made the mistake of receiving from his Highness an improper and impertinent letter, which we have already quoted; and when his Highness found that Lord Northbrook had put up with this affront, he apparently thought that he could not adopt too insulting a tone towards him. The communications from Cabul which reached the Viceroy towards the end of 1873 and the beginning of 1874, were even more offensive; and had Lord Northbrook been properly sensible of what was due to his high office and to British *prestige* in the East, he would have declined to receive them. What are we to say of such a passage as this in the Ameer's letter of 13th November 1873?—

"The friendly declaration of your Excellency to the effect that you will maintain towards myself the same policy which was followed by Lord Lawrence and Lord Mayo, has been the cause of much gratification to me. My friend, under this circumstance of the case, it was not necessary to hold all those conversations with Syud Noor Mohammed Shah at Simla. The understanding arrived at in Umballa is quite sufficient. As long as the beneficent Government of her Majesty the Queen of England continues firm and constant in its friendship, I shall also, please God, remain firm in my sincere friendship, as on the occasion of my meeting at Umballa with Lord Mayo, whose writing I hold in my possession, as also a document from Lord Lawrence. Of this friendship your Excellency may rest assured."

The translation has not removed the sneer at the fruitless issue of

the Simla Conference, or the disrespectful insinuation that the Ameer trusted more to the pledges of the Viceroy's predecessors than to his Excellency's goodwill. Again, on the 10th April 1874, we find the Ameer flouting Lord Northbrook's predecessors in his lordship's face in a way that certainly, to say the least of it, was far from complimentary. Lord Northbrook had written to the Ameer on January 23, saying that he was anxious to give his Highness "assurances of support even more explicit" than had been given by Lord Lawrence and Lord Mayo, but he thought it would be well to postpone discussion of the matter till some more convenient opportunity. The Ameer was certainly to be pardoned for not having discovered the fact of this intention from his lordship's previous despatches or from his conversations with the envoy. Shere Ali coldly replies:—

"The arrangements made by Lord Lawrence and Lord Mayo at the Umballa Conference are sufficient, and there is no need to repeat all this discussion. . . . Your Excellency, since Lord Lawrence and Lord Mayo, especially the former, possessed an intimate knowledge of Affghanistan and its frontiers, and your Excellency also must certainly have acquired the same knowledge, I therefore am desirous that your Excellency, after full and careful consideration of the approval expressed by her Majesty the Queen, the '*sunnud*' of Lord Lawrence, and the decision of Lord Mayo, will remain firm and constant, in order that Affghanistan and its territories may be maintained inviolate and secure."

It is quite clear from these extracts that all hopes of Lord Northbrook being able to influence the Ameer in the interests of our alliance were at an end. His Highness deigned to take no notice of the proffered "more explicit assurances," and indeed by this time he

was beginning to assure himself by negotiations on the other side of his dominions. Lord Northbrook had had his opportunity, and neglected to turn it to account. Now that he was disposed to rectify the omission, he found that the Ameer had fairly embarked in a course of reckless intrigue, and was in no mood to accept either his assurances or his counsels.

In the meantime, while the Government of India was gradually relaxing its hold upon Shere Ali, and the Ameer on his side was beginning to resent a diplomacy which professed to set store by his friendship, and yet refused to recognise the circumstances in which he was placed, Russia had been drawing nearer and nearer to the "neutral zone." Among the unsettled tribes and ill-defined territories of Turkistan it was impossible for a Power like that of Russia to arrest its progress at pleasure, however averse it might have been to extending its boundaries. We get an instructive glimpse of the system under which the Khanates were conquered, in the conversations which took place between Lord Augustus Loftus and the Russian officials in the early part of 1874. Prince Gortschakoff certainly admitted that there was a party anxious for military activity and decorations, but asserted that his power was strong enough to keep their zeal within bounds, and that he would do so. It is quite clear, however, from the papers, that so long as the Turkistan commanders conducted their operations with secrecy and despatch, the Russian Chancellor was well content to let them play their own game. If they were successful, the St Petersburg Government would undertake their justification; if they failed, it would apologise for the "*mal entendu*," as M. de Westmann, the acting

Minister for Foreign Affairs, called General Llamakin's ambitious attempt to annex the Attrek and Goorgan valleys to Russia. The only mistake they could commit was being found out too soon. This gave rise to awkward questions, which could not always safely be met by a denial, and might compel the Government for its own credit to stop the undertaking. We hear much of Russian autocracy and military despotism, but really the despatches in the Central Asian Blue-book would almost tempt us to suppose that no administrators and commandants have, in modern times, enjoyed half the freedom and latitude that have been extended to the Russian officers in Central Asia. There is, withal, a deal of ingenuous modesty manifested in the way in which they describe their own proceedings. A military expedition is playfully designated as a *reconnaissance*; an annexation proclamation, commanding obedience to the "Sovereign of the world," and telling the Turkomans "to look to themselves for good or evil," is a "mere friendly letter" (Correspondence respecting Central Asia, p. 17); scouting expeditions are simply scientific explorations,—and so on. Another very surprising fact revealed by the correspondence is, that the St Petersburg Government knew next to nothing of the proceedings of its officers in Central Asia, for it is almost invariably by the circuitous route *via* the Government of India, our Foreign Office, and the British ambassador at St Petersburg, that it receives any information of its own aggressions in Turkistan. And so careful were the Liberals, when in office, of Russia's sensitive feelings about the proceedings of her representatives in Central Asia, that they invariably evaded all allusion to these until they had become a

matter of European scandal. This course kept our relations with Russia to all appearances fair and above board; but it was merely a time policy, and each Government knew that the other had something behind hand. We have only too clear a proof of the timidity and want of frankness on our own side in the suppression by the Liberal Cabinet of the Indian despatch, dated 30th June 1873, which Lord Northbrook had summed up in a tone conciliatory to Russia, and "in accord with Gladstone's speech," and which the Calcutta Government had expressly desired to be handed to the Czar's ministers.

We might draw from the Central Asian Blue-books of 1873, and those just published, materials for a very damaging exposure of the way in which our Central Asian interests had been trifled with by Lord Granville and the Duke of Argyll during the last two years of the Liberal Ministry. Our space, however, compels us to confine ourselves to an examination of such facts as bear most directly upon the origin of the Affghan rupture. Although Prince Gortschakoff had expressly declared, in the beginning of 1874, that "Affghanistan was beyond the sphere of Russia's political action, and that, happen what might in the internal state of that country, the Imperial Government would not interfere," neither India nor England could shut its eyes to the certainty that such a promise must necessarily be contingent. It was merely a matter of time, and of very short time too, when the Russian boundary must necessarily become conterminous with the Ameer's northern frontier; and then, had Russia been the most peaceful and inoffensive of modern Powers, she would, for her own interests, have been obliged to concern herself with the internal administration of Aff-

ghanistan. But her Central Asian representatives were not disposed to wait until this necessity should of itself arise. On one pretence or another, the Russian commandants had foisted communications and private missions on the Ameer almost from the time of the Umballa Durbar. These attempts were made through Bokhariots, who are the Greeks of Central Asia, and the ever-ready agents of mischief and intrigue; and so the St Petersburg Government could, at the expense of an *equivoque*, assure our representative that no Russian messenger or mission had been near Cabul. So long as Lord Mayo was spared, the Ameer loyally reported the arrival of these missions, and laid the letters which they brought before the Viceroy for his counsel. It was not until Lord Northbrook discouraged these confidences that the Ameer began to act for himself with respect to the Russian overtures. When the Khivan expedition was raising a ferment all over Central Asia—when the Ameer was feeling that the chances of his being dragged into collision were steadily growing more imminent—and when Russian envoys and Russian letters were pouring in upon him with increasing frequency,—his Highness fain would have repeated this confidence to Lord Northbrook, as he had done to Lord Mayo. But Lord Northbrook coldly repulsed him.

"Should," said Lord Northbrook, "his Highness the Ameer allude to these letters, and manifest the apprehensions which his courtiers entertain, the agent should be instructed to state that the Viceroy and Governor-General in Council see in them no ground whatever for apprehension, but rather an additional reason for believing that the Russian authorities desire to maintain none other relations but those of amity with the Government of Affghanistan."

This, be it noted, was a direct reversal of Lord Mayo's policy which had for its primary object to encourage Shere Ali to give the Government of India his unreserved confidence, and to repose his trust in its alliance, at a time when the increasing exigency of Central Asian affairs had made the wisdom of that policy much more apparent. This response, followed by the refusal of a definite guarantee, and by the futile negotiations at Simla, completed the evil impression upon Shere Ali's mind. Abandoned by Lord Northbrook to Russian intrigue, we can hardly blame him for falling into the snares which the Russian officials in Turkistan were actively preparing for his reception.

The Russian letters to Cabul, at first civil explanations of military movements designed to allay possible apprehensions on the part of the Ameer, soon began to evince a closer interest in Affghanistan. Shere Ali, in November 1873, nominated his son Abdulla Jan his heir-apparent, and sent a formal intimation of this step to the Government of India. This was replied to by an equally formal communication from the Viceroy; but the officiating Russian Governor-General, to whom a similar notice had been given, seized the opportunity to offer high-flown congratulations to the Ameer and his intended successor. In a previous article we expressed an opinion that it would be found that Russia had succeeded in ingratiating herself with the Ameer chiefly by taking a side with his Highness in his family quarrels regarding the succession. The papers now published fully confirm our anticipations in this respect.

Bearing in mind that all the evils which of late years have overtaken Affghanistan have sprung from the

struggles for sovereignty of the Barukzye family, we are of opinion that Lord Northbrook maintained a very prudent course with regard to the succession. In this respect at least he loyally continued Lord Mayo's policy. And when he interposed on behalf of Yakoob Khan, although such interposition no doubt aggravated the Ameer's hostility, the Viceroy took a step that all parties at home must unite in approving of. The unfortunate drawback that attended this interference was, that Lord Northbrook had before that time thrown away all chances of being able to bring personal influence to bear upon the Ameer on this or on any other subject. The natural result of this attempted mediation was therefore to impel Shere Ali still more closely towards the Russian emissaries, who saw that their surest game was to champion the cause of the boy Abdulla; and there was a considerable party of *durbarees* at Cabul, who, from enmity to Yakoob or friendship for the heir-apparent, did their best to encourage him in trusting to Russia's assistance for securing his favourite's chances of the kingdom.

In this unsatisfactory position stood our relations with Affghanistan at the time when the present Government came into office in February 1874. From the Indian side Lord Northbrook had lost all that Lord Mayo had gained for us, and there was little hope of much being done with the Ameer through the medium of the Viceroy. At home the Central Asian question had either been altogether neglected, or considered solely from a point of view conciliatory to Russia. How little interest the India Office under the Liberal Government had taken in the subject, may be inferred from a statement made by Lord Cranbrook in the debate on the Address in the Upper House. "Your lord-

ships will view with astonishment," said he, "the fact that during the whole of the time that the Duke of Argyll was Secretary of State for India, not a single despatch on this subject was sent by the noble Duke to the noble Earl the Viceroy that can be found." The only communication from his Grace appears to be his telegram requesting the Viceroy to tell Shere Ali that her Majesty's Government did not share his alarm about Russia, and would abide by "its settled policy," the exact nature of which we have never been able to define, unless it was to conciliate Russia and keep in accord with Gladstone's speeches. It is not uncharacteristic of the Duke of Argyll that having thus neglected the Central Asian Question when it was his special duty to attend to it, he should at the present moment be anxiously preparing to settle it by the issue of a post octavo. His lieutenant, Mr Grant Duff, too, appears to have applied his superior mind to the matter, more with a view to the edification of his Elgin electors than to be of service to either the Home or the Indian Governments. The right honourable gentleman very naturally began his review of the Affghan difficulty, in the debate on the Vote of Censure, at the point where his successor came into office, for he does not appear to have had much personal knowledge of the subject during the time that it might properly have been supposed to have engaged the greater part of his attention.

No sooner, however, had the present Ministry come into power, than it discovered the imperative necessity of putting our relations with the Ameer on a securer basis. Whatever that "settled policy" had been of which the Duke of Argyll had spoken, it was quite evident that it had broken down in Lord

Northbrook's hands, and that serious dangers of entanglements from the other side were threatening to sweep Affghanistan without the range of our influence. General Llamakin, by his "*mal entendus*" on the At-trek, was menacing Meshed on the highway to Herat; and the assurances which Lord Derby was able to extract from the St Petersburg Government were neither so consistent nor explicit as to warrant us in pinning much faith to them. Throughout the whole of 1874 the Government did its best to establish a firm understanding with Russia upon the various points of Central Asian policy that came to the surface; but it was quite evident that the latter had launched out on a course of annexation between the Caspian and the Oxus which it was beyond the power of diplomacy to rein in. The Government, we have reason to know, was not satisfied with Lord Northbrook's management of the Affghan negotiations; and it had no cause to be so. But it does not follow that it should, therefore, have either reversed his measures or recalled himself. A wide freedom of action must always be allowed to an Indian Viceroy in return for the heavy responsibilities that rest upon him personally; and when the Opposition now urges that the Government should have taken one or other of these measures, it is guilty of a cheap impertinence. What Lord Salisbury did was to recommend the Viceroy to take such steps as the altered aspect of affairs beyond the north-west frontier exigently demanded. In his despatch of 22d January 1875, to which the Opposition has taken so much exception, he points out that the information which Government received regarding Affghanistan was inadequate for its guidance, and that the establishment of an English agency at Herat

would not only be important as a source of information, but "would be an indication of English solicitude for the safety of our allies, and so tend to discourage counsels dangerous to the peace of Asia."

There has been a good deal of abuse vented on this despatch by members of the Opposition, who have carefully left out of count the condition of Central Asia at the time when it was written. The Russian movements on the Attrek were still causing increasing alarm, and we had no means of satisfying ourselves how far they menaced Affghan interests. The information which reached India was still very meagre, and the capacity of the Cabul Munshee for grasping the exact situation of affairs more than doubtful. Another chance was thus given to Lord Northbrook for remedying the mistakes which he had made with regard to the Ameer. The opening of negotiations for the despatch of an English officer to Herat would have enabled him to explain those "more explicit assurances" which he had professed himself anxious to offer in 1873, but which the irritated Ameer had refused to listen to. Had the Ameer been addressed at this time in a proper spirit, frightened as he then was at the Russian movements from the Caspian in his direction; had he received a renewed guarantee for the security of his dominions; and had he been made clearly to understand that the presence of a British officer at Herat was meant as a token to other Powers of our interest in his independence,—we have little doubt that he could have been made to hear reason, and that we should once more have regained our ascendancy in his country. But Lord Northbrook was not disposed to grasp the opportunity, and showed every wish to evade interference with Affghan affairs at all. He

craved time, and, as is usually the way when rulers want to shirk responsibility and postpone an unpleasant duty, called for reports. It was in January 1875 that Lord Salisbury instructed the Viceroy to take measures for obtaining Shere Ali's assent to posting an English officer to Herat. It was June before Lord Northbrook sent home a despatch stating his objections to his course, and enclosing the opinions of a number of distinguished Indian officials in corroboration of his arguments. The weight of Indian official opinion was undoubtedly on Lord Northbrook's side, as it could hardly fail to have been, from the leading questions which the officers consulted were invited to answer; but it must be carefully remembered that the case put to them did not embrace the increasing influence which the Russians were acquiring at Cabul, or the alternative necessity which was now pressing upon us of either reclaiming the Ameer to his engagements, or of devising other means for strengthening our position in Affghanistan.

Meantime, in the interval between Lord Salisbury's despatch and Lord Northbrook's objections to carrying out its instructions, the tone of Russia regarding the Affghan understanding underwent a material change. Prince Gortschakoff's circular announcements that Russia had reached the goal of her eastward progress, have always been the prelude to a fresh advance; and his Highness's Circular of 5th April 1875 did not belie its predecessors. That despatch introduced the new and startling assumption, that under the agreement existing between the two Powers, Russia was left full freedom of action upon every portion of territory between her own frontiers and Affghanistan, without any apparent right of remonstrance on the part of the English

Government. In other words, Russia now claimed the right, when she chose, to push her frontiers up to the Ameer's territories; while our Embassy at St Petersburg reports soon after that "many Russians, and amongst them men of political position and in Government service, entertain the full persuasion that the maintenance for any number of years of a great neutral territory between the two empires of Russia and India is an impossibility, and that the notion must be abandoned." Lord Salisbury promptly pointed out the new danger which threatened if Russia were confirmed in this assumption, and it added to the urgency for pushing on a satisfactory settlement with Shere Ali. In November 1875 evidences of intrigue between Russia and Cabul had so multiplied; the danger from the direction of Merv had so increased; the growing insecurity of the Cabul Government from fiscal corruption and excessive taxation had become so marked,—that the mere establishment of a single agency at Herat would no longer meet the crisis. Lord Northbrook's Government had allowed the time to pass when such a measure would have sufficed, and Lord Salisbury was now compelled to order the despatch of a mission to Cabul without loss of time. Again Lord Northbrook's Government proved obstructive; again a despatch was sent home, showing, by elaborate arguments, that it was best to do nothing—the fact being that Lord Northbrook had been so uniformly unfortunate in his Affghan policy, and had kindled so keen a resentment in Shere Ali's mind against himself personally, that he could entertain no reasonable hope of conducting further negotiations with success. Under these circumstances Lord Northbrook, we think, did

well to make over to another the carrying into effect of a policy which was distasteful to him, although it was the only course of which the situation admitted; and he accordingly came home, bequeathing to his successor the worst legacy of foreign policy that any Governor-General of India had left behind him since the days of Lord Auckland.

The bitter attack made by the Opposition upon Lord Lytton has called forth from Lord Cranbrook, from the Lord Chancellor, and from the Marquis of Salisbury, so full explanations of the present Viceroy's course of action, that we need not dwell upon subsequent events with the same minuteness as we have felt it necessary to use in the case of Lord Northbrook's Affghan negotiations. It has been said that Lord Lytton was sent out to India to force English Residents upon the Ameer. This is not an incorrect description of the instructions contained in the admirable despatch which Lord Salisbury penned for the new Viceroy's guidance. Thanks to Lord Northbrook's policy, we could hope to do nothing with the Ameer unless a firmer tone were adopted towards him, and he were given to understand that the time had now come when he must make us some return for our previous gratuitous assistance, even though the desired concessions might not be altogether to his taste. Lord Lytton was instructed

"To find an early occasion for sending to Cabul a temporary mission, furnished with such instructions as may, perhaps, enable it to overcome the Ameer's apparent reluctance to the establishment of permanent British agencies in Affghanistan, by convincing his Highness that the Government of India is not coldly indifferent to the fears he has so frequently urged upon its attention, that it is willing to afford him material support in the

defence of his territory from any actual and unprovoked external aggression, but that it cannot practically avert or provide for such a contingency without timely and unrestricted permission to place its own agents in those parts of his dominions whence they may best watch the course of events."

The Government was now prepared to give to Shere Ali all that he had hitherto sought in return for the right to station agents in his country. We were ready to give him, as the price of that concession, a fixed and augmented subsidy; a decided recognition of Abdulla Jan as his successor; and an explicit pledge, by treaty or otherwise, of material support in case of foreign aggression. Now, it may be asked, did Shere Ali feel so keenly jealous of the presence of British officers in his country, or did he anticipate so many difficulties from their residence among his subjects, that he could readily put aside the guarantees which we offered rather than consent to this measure? Some Members have insinuated that his recollections of the unfortunate issues of former English missions to Cabul made him dread that fresh envoys would simply prove the *avant-couriers* of another expedition. Our readers may dismiss this idea from their imagination. We have no hesitation in saying that *Shere Ali, if he could, would readily have closed with the terms of the Government of India; and that he did not do so was simply because he stood already too far committed to Russia to dare to admit British officers into his country, without having his perfidy exposed, and running the risk of quarrelling with both sides.* Those who can read between the lines will find ample confirmation for this assertion in the papers recently published. No doubt Shere Ali would have preferred the guarantees and the increased subsidy without

any inconvenient stipulations tacked on to them; but there is equally little doubt that in the then pressing condition of the Cabul exchequer, and in the insecure state of his country, he would gladly have closed with our terms, had he dared to break with the Russian Governor-General of Turkistan, and have his perfidious dealings of the previous twelvemonth exposed to the eyes of the Government of India.

The rebellion in the western principalities of the Porte, and the certainty that Russia was watching for an opportunity to take part in the quarrel, exercised an important influence upon the Ameer's attitude during the year 1875. The Khokand insurrection employed General Kauffmann's energies for some time during that summer; but no sooner were the rebels put under than he appears to have renewed his efforts to secure Shere Ali to the Russian side. A Samarcand agent visited Cabul in September of that year, and there is every ground for believing that his complimentary mission was merely an excuse for private representations and overtures, to which the Ameer, exasperated as he then was by Lord Northbrook's coldness, lent only too willing an ear. By the beginning of 1876 the possibilities of a collision of British and Russian interests in Europe, arising out of the Turkish difficulty, were coming more into view; and it was only natural that Russia should recognise the importance of inflaming the Afghan ulcer on the side of our Indian empire.

On the 25th February 1876, Count Schouvaloff informed Lord Derby that the presumed understanding which had hitherto existed between the two Powers that Afghanistan was to remain outside the sphere of Russian influence, should cease as unpractical; and that all the fancied security which we had

built upon the supposed neutral zone, and Russia's pledges of her limited "sphere of political action" was swept to the wind. It was three days after this communication that Lord Salisbury penned his despatch from which we have quoted above; and it was not an hour too soon. This fact, the altered attitude of Russia, which the Opposition has conveniently left out of sight in the controversy, effected an entire alteration in our interests in the Affghan question. Henceforth, under the new scope which Russia now gave to her aims, our first duty was to provide for the security of our frontier; and Shere Ali's pleasure, and even Shere Ali's independence, were certainly secondary matters to our own safety. Even those who are most disposed to criticise our policy at this period will scarcely gainsay this fact; and if they keep in mind the force of this "new departure," which Russia had announced to us, the action of both the Home and Indian Governments will yield a truer interpretation. All through 1876 the Russian Government either evaded the discussion of its Affghan connection or returned assurances that were insincere upon the face of them. When we produced evidences of General Kauffman's interference with the Ameer, and laid before the St Petersburg Government a copy of his letter, we received a direct denial, which the Blue-books show to have been a falsehood. But by the end of the year the Czar and his Ministers had other matters to engross their attention, and General Kauffmann was left to take his own course unchecked. "*Quand nous avons en main une baleine,*" said Prince Gortschakoff to Lord A. Loftus on the 15th November, "*je ne puis pas m'occuper des petits poissons.*" The way was therefore left clear for action on the part of

the Russian Governor-General, whose successes his Government would be glad to turn to account, and whose failures it would be able to disclaim any responsibility for.

The year 1876 was spent in fruitless efforts by Lord Lytton and his Government to reclaim the Ameer from his isolated position, and to restore those cordial relations which had existed at the time of Lord Mayo's assassination. The situation had of course so far altered, that new and more definite guarantees were needed on both sides; and the Government of India was quite willing to do its part. We sent a most intelligent native officer, Ressaldar Major Khanan Khan, to the Ameer in the spring of 1876, bearing a letter announcing Lord Lytton's accession to office, and mentioning the gracious motives which had induced her Majesty to add the style of Empress of India to her Royal Titles. The Ameer refused to receive him, and the messenger returned from Cabul as he came. This slight would sufficiently have justified the Government in adopting a sterner tone towards Shere Ali, but the inexpediency of driving him openly into the outstretched arms of Russia counselled patience—in addition to which the Government appears to have been sincerely desirous to secure the independence of Affghanistan in friendly alliance with India. In October our Cabul agent came to Simla with communications which seemed to afford a basis for negotiations. He stated the Ameer's causes of discontent arising from Lord Northbrook's policy, which our readers already know, and unfolded the whole course of Russian intrigue which had been intervening between us and our ally.

"In short, the information gradually extracted from our Cabul agent con-

vinced us that the system on which we had hitherto conducted our relations with Shere Ali had practically resulted not only in the alienation of his Highness from the Power which had unconditionally subsidised and openly protected him, but also in the increased closeness and confidential character of his relations with the only other Power that can ever cause serious danger to our empire in India. The Vakeel, however, represented to the Viceroy that the Ameer, though strongly disinclined to admit British officers into any part of Afghanistan, would probably, if the point were pressed, accept such a condition rather than forfeit the advantage of a long-desired alliance with the British Government upon terms certain to strengthen his personal position at home, about which his Highness was chiefly anxious."

If the Ameer was at all sincere at this time, his change of mind was probably due to the projected Russian expedition against Merv, which was one of Prince Gortschakoff's "*petits poissons*" that had to be let go when the Turkish whale was to be taken in hand. Whether sincere or not, Shere Ali had given our envoy apparently to understand that as a *dernier ressort*, and rather than altogether forfeit our friendship, he would accept British agents; and this fact furnishes a powerful justification for the course which the Government of India had since pursued. But before the interview could be arranged between Sir Lewis Pelly and the Ameer's representative at Peshawur, an event had taken place which thoroughly unsettled the Ameer.

Russia had mobilised her forces, and there were the gravest odds that a war between her and Britain would be inevitable. Under these circumstances Shere Ali would have been no Affghan, no Barukzye, if he had taken a side at the beginning of the quarrel, and before it could be conjectured who was to

be the winner. We need not discuss the lengthened negotiations at Peshawur in the beginning of 1877. It must be evident to every one who reads the official report of the conferences between Sir Lewis Pelly and Syud Noor Mohammed, that the latter had no power to come to any arrangement, and that his master simply wished to postpone a settlement until the issue of events could be ascertained. The war-fever which seemed to be a universal epidemic at that time broke out also in Cabul, and Shere Ali appears to have so far caught the infection as to vapour about a *jihad*, or a religious war against the infidel British—a course which was probably designed rather to propitiate the Russians than to cause the Government of India any serious alarm. Shere Ali's eyes were now bent on the European crisis; it was by the issue of events there that he intended to shape his course, and he had no intention of allowing himself to be prematurely entangled into any agreements with a side which might prove in the end not to be the winning one. The Peshawur conferences were protracted with great patience on the part of both the Government of India and Sir Lewis Pelly; and every effort was made on our side to smooth away difficulties, to inspire the Ameer with confidence, and to provide a basis for a new and permanent understanding that would have guaranteed Shere Ali in the independent possession of his dominions, and have secured for ourselves the means of watching over the mutual interests of India and Afghanistan. But it was quite clear that the Ameer was then in no mood to listen to reason; and when the envoy died before the conference was finally closed, Lord Lytton withdrew Sir Lewis Pelly, and very properly declined to allow the time of the Gov-

ernment of India to be wasted in discussing the Ameer's complaints and doubts when his Highness positively declined to meet our proposals for their removal. Lord Lytton has been censured for not having waited until the new messenger came, but those who have taken this view of the subject can hardly have been acquainted with the tone of the Cabul *durbār* at this time, or they would have been more guarded in their strictures. Shere Ali at this period seems to have lost his head, much about the same time that a similar mental alienation overtook other eminent individuals nearer home. He had apparently made his calculations that in the almost certain event of war between England and Russia, the latter would march upon India through his territories; and as he stood in more immediate danger from Russia than from India, which he knew would not interfere with him but as a last measure, and after a *locus penitentiæ* had been granted him, he felt that his best policy would be to give the first place in his plans to his Northern neighbour. He was, moreover, apparently under the impression that if he were to accept the overtures which the Viceroy was making him, he would draw down the immediate resentment of Russia upon his territories; and we do not know what grounds the latter may have given him for this belief. At all events the Government of India now knew enough of Shere Ali's views, and of the embarrassing position into which his intrigues and shifty tactics had thrown him, to be conscious that nothing more was to be hoped for from suasive measures from the outside, and that our only chance of rescuing Affghanistan from the fate of Khokand, Khiva, and Bokhara, was by bringing the Ameer to book in his own capital,

and by extracting from him a definite answer to the proposals that remained for settlement between him and her Majesty's Government.

Admitting this to be the case, why, say the Opposition, did Lord Lytton not at once follow up Sir Lewis Pelly's Mission by an embassy similar to that which, some eighteen months later, he despatched under Sir Neville Chamberlain? Like most of the other criticisms to which recent policy has been subjected, this question takes into account only one side of the case. But it must be borne in mind that in Europe Russia was now preparing to take the field, that she was as ready to seek cause of offence in our foreign policy as her Liberal allies in this country were to find it for her, and that the interests of peace demanded guarded action in India as well as at home. So for a time the Affghan question had to stand aside, until our negotiations with the Ameer could be renewed without adding to the already existing rancour of Russia, or giving her further excuses for evading our mediatory attempts at making peace between her and the Porte. The despatch which Lord Salisbury sent out to India in the autumn of 1878 summed up our position with admirable conciseness, and regulated our policy until the crisis in Europe had drawn to a close:—

“The independence of Affghanistan is a matter of importance to the British Government; and as an essential part of arrangements for its protection, her Majesty's Government would still be glad to station agents upon whom they could rely at Herat and Candahar. In the event, therefore, of the Ameer within a reasonable time spontaneously manifesting a desire to come to a friendly understanding with your Excellency on the basis of the terms lately offered to but declined by him, his advances should not be rejected. If, on the other hand, he continues to

maintain an attitude of isolation and scarcely-veiled hostility, the British Government stands unpledged to any obligations, and in any contingencies which may arise in Afghanistan, will be at liberty to adopt such measures for the protection and permanent tranquillity of the north-west frontier of her Majesty's Indian dominions as the circumstances of the moment may render expedient, without regard to the wishes of the Ameer Shere Ali or the interest of his dynasty."

We find little in this paragraph of the hostile, grasping spirit which Government has been accused of showing towards the Ameer, or of the offensive attitude towards Russia attributed to Lord Beaconsfield's Cabinet. On the contrary, the forbearance which was then manifested was such as few administrations have ever shown under similarly critical circumstances. Although the watchful observation which was kept upon Afghanistan during the winter of 1877-78 could have left the Government of India under no doubt that it would at an early date be compelled to bring pressure to bear upon the Ameer, and although the depressed condition of Russia's military fortunes at the time offered no slight temptation to action, the Government was resolved to do nothing in Asia that might furnish any pretence for postponing the conclusion of peace in Europe. The conduct of the Ameer was in no way calculated to allay our anxiety, for his communications with the Russian Government of Turkistan grew more frequent and confidential; and the preponderance of Russian influence in his counsels was seen by the fact that every warlike outburst in the Russian press was answered at Cabul by Shere Ali's threats of engaging in a *jihad* against the English in India. He was now completely in the toils of

the Russian intriguers; and if we hold him responsible for his hostile conduct to us at this period, we must still make allowance for the unseen force which was probably precipitating him against us. The war in Europe, and the check which Russia was then beginning to experience at the hands of British diplomacy, had weakened the control of the Russian Foreign Office over its officials in Asia, as may readily be seen from the ignorance, real or pretended, which it showed of General Kauffmann's doings; and it is more than probable that that administrator was allowed to take his own way, and do anything that seemed to him likely to create a diversion in favour of Russia by disconcerting British policy in India.

Reviewing the aims of Russia in Central Asia, her interest at the time in avoiding another war, and her certain knowledge that England would not surrender Afghanistan to her influence without drawing the sword, we may express a strong doubt whether the Stolieteff mission meant as much as it professed to do, and whether its main aim was not to divert the attention of the British Government from the execution of the Berlin Treaty. That Russia was not prepared to run the risk of a war with England for the sake of a position in Afghanistan, her subsequent course has made clear; and if the mission was not one of those *mal entendus* which occur now and then on her Asiatic frontier, we must look upon it as a mere diplomatic move—an attempt to hold our power in India in check until Russia could get wriggled out of her European embarrassments. So far as Russia is concerned, the move has been a blunder, and goes a long way to prove that the traditional skill and astuteness that were wont

to guide her foreign policy must now be reckoned among the qualities of the past.

The details of the circumstances which led to the despatch of Sir Neville Chamberlain's Mission have been so carefully discussed in Parliament and in the newspapers, that we need not go over them minutely. The publication of the despatches has entirely cut away the grounds upon which the Liberals had attacked the Government of India; and the Opposition very prudently said as little as possible about the subject, preferring rather to found imaginary charges of imperialism upon the very matter-of-fact instructions which Lord Salisbury had sent out to the Viceroy. In criticising the steps which Lord Lytton was compelled to take between June and October of last year, the Opposition speakers, with scarcely an exception, took no account of the difficulties which circumscribed the action of the Government of India, limiting its choice practically to doing what it did or doing nothing; or of the fact that the last chance of saving Afghanistan from falling altogether under Russian influence was just then slipping from our fingers. The Government knew well that Shere Ali was so far committed to his Russian friends, that he could not venture to accept our terms unless some show of pressure was put upon him. There was still a possibility that by sending a mission to his own capital, to put before him plainly the risk that he was running, and to convince him of the good intentions of the British Government, we might circumvent the counsels of his Russian advisers, and preserve the integrity of his territories. The despatch of a Russian mission to Cabul compelled us to carry out our plans in all haste. The Ameer had repeatedly said that he could not be respon-

sible for the safety of an English mission, and therefore it was necessary that it should be made sufficiently strong to protect itself. It was of no use then to talk of negotiations on the frontier; the only assurance that we could have of Shere Ali's real intentions was by seeing him face to face, and directly foiling the advice of the foreign intriguers. At the same time, there was little prospect of Shere Ali being able to free himself from the pro-Russian clique in his Durbar sufficiently to embrace the opportunity which the Viceroy was offering him. His temper had again undergone a change for the worse since the death of his son Abdulla, and his mind had again relapsed into that state of reckless and sullen moroseness which had formerly characterised it after the battle of Kujhbaz. Knowing this, the Government of India had little hope for a peaceful settlement of our differences with the Ameer; but none of the steps which it took betrayed any such feeling. It made every preparation for the despatch of a friendly mission; it omitted no formality that was due to Shere Ali's dignity or to its own honour; it went to work with deliberate and diplomatic gravity, although it must have been conscious that its pains were lost labour; it addressed the Ameer in language that was both dignified and courteous: and when the Mission did fail—when the Ameer with his eyes open spurned the British alliance, thinking in all probability that Russia would support him—no reflections could with justice rest upon the Government of India; and by a strong majority, both in Parliament and in the country, Britain has stamped its course with her approval.

From what we have said, some may feel that Shere Ali is in a

sense a victim to the Liberal desire to conciliate Russia and keep in accord with Mr Gladstone's speeches; and that if abstract justice were to be done, we ought rather to impeach Lord Northbrook than make war upon the Ameer. We have no desire to encourage any such false sympathy for Shere Ali. His conduct towards us has been selfish, insincere, and ungrateful. Our assistance kept him on the throne at a time when he in all probability would not have maintained himself in Cabul for twelve months, but for the British friendship and money and arms, against the ability and popularity which Abdulruhman Khan then enjoyed. He may have had some excuse for resenting the indifferant treatment he met with from Lord Northbrook, but that furnished him with no excuse for slighting the manifest disposition which Lord Lytton evinced to give him efficient guarantees for the integrity of his dominions; nor for his intrigues with a Power with whom our relations were in a precarious position; nor for the threats which he had publicly uttered of hostilities towards the Government that had befriended him and maintained his power. Lord Cranbrook, in his despatch of the 18th November, has summed up Shere Ali's personal offence in language that is severely and impartially judicious, and we cannot do better than quote his lordship's exact words:—

“This conduct on the part of the Ameer was wholly without justification. He was aware, from various communications addressed to him by your Excellency's predecessors, that the Russian Government had given assurance to the Government of her Majesty to regard his territories as completely beyond its sphere of action. He was equally aware that the whole policy of the British Government since his accession to the throne had been to strengthen his power and authority, and to protect him from foreign aggres-

sion, although the methods adopted for doing so may not have at all times accorded with his Highness's own views. He had received from the British Government evidence of goodwill, manifested by large gifts of money and arms, as well as by its successful efforts in obtaining from the Czar's Government its formal recognition of a fixed boundary agreeable to himself between his kingdom and the neighbouring Khanates. His subjects had been allowed to pass freely throughout India, to the great benefit of the trade and commerce of his country; and in no single instance has the Ameer himself, or any of his people, been treated unjustly or inhospitably within British jurisdiction. By every bond of international courtesy, as well as by the treaty engagement of 1855 existing between the two countries, binding him to be the friend of our friends, and the enemy of our enemies, the Ameer was bound to a line of conduct the reverse of that which he adopted.”

So far as Shere Ali personally is concerned, we can have no compunctions about either the justice or the necessity of the war: we may feel sorry for his subjects; but there is this consolation, that however irksome to them may be a temporary occupation of their country, it has saved them from worse evils, which Shere Ali's Russian leanings would infallibly have brought upon them.

The discussions in Parliament on the Address, on the Vote of Censure, and on the imposition of the cost of the Affghan expedition on the Indian revenues, have on the whole been of benefit. The strong majorities in both Houses who voted confidence in the Government, and the still stronger majority in the Commons on the question of finance, have given a direct contradiction to the Liberal assertions that the Conservative party was divided and breaking into disunion. The conduct of the Opposition, on the other hand, clearly showed that they had no intention to deal with Affghan-istan themselves, and no desire to

wrest the question out of the hands of Government. They knew also that the course which they proposed to themselves met with no sympathy outside the ranks of their own partisans; and that the only support which they were receiving came from quarters whose assistance was of doubtful benefit. Under such circumstances, with no firm ground for attack, and feeling themselves out of sympathy with the country, it is hard to say what the Liberal leaders ought to have done. We have no quarrel with them for fulfilling the functions of an Opposition. At a time like the present the want of sound criticism of the measures of Government would have been a disadvantage only a little less than the clamours of the ill-conditioned and worse organised rabble who sought to annoy the Government and the country during the Russo-Turkish troubles. The Opposition arraignment has been, as was to be expected, the means of strengthening the hands of Government, and of making its policy clear before the eyes of the country. The course taken by Lord Halifax in the Lords, and by Mr Whitbread in the Commons, was quite defensible and proper from a party point of view, and the Government has no reason to complain either of the attack or of its result. The unfortunate feature in the present state of the Opposition is, that its procedure is liable to be taken advantage of by an irresponsible and intractable section of its own members, who discard argument for personal abuse and imputation of motives, in a style of debate that until the last few years we had been accustomed to look upon as peculiarly characteristic of Mr Gladstone's "kin beyond sea."

The meeting of Parliament found the Opposition without any definite plans, but disposed to turn to account

such opportunities as the situation might offer. They got little assistance from the Queen's Speech; and the telegram of the successful attack on the Peiwar Pass, arriving as it did, while the Houses were assembling, was not encouraging. There was also an embarrassing want of unanimity of purpose among themselves which forbade their indulging hopes of being able to direct a strong and combined attack against Government. A considerable party was anxious to discharge the duty of a constitutional Opposition, to criticise the action of Government without seeking to embarrass or obstruct it. Another was determined to do anything that might bring the Government into disrepute, irrespective of consequences. While a third, and a very large section, though at heart approving of the Government's Affghan policy, joined in the Opposition vote because they knew that it could do no harm. Had the division been a neck-and-neck struggle, and had the prosecution of the Affghan war depended upon the result, we have little doubt that many Liberal members would have thought twice about their vote before they followed Mr Whitbread into the lobby.

The chief feature of the debates in the House of Lords was Lord Cranbrook's spirited and convincing vindication of the policy of Government, and of his own summary of it in his despatch of the 18th November. In this difficulty the country has leaned more upon his lordship than upon any other individual member of the Cabinet, and its confidence has not been misplaced. The narrative which we have set before our readers will show that neither in his despatch nor in his speeches in the House has Lord Cranbrook borne more strongly upon the evil effects of Lord North-

brook's dealings with Shere Ali than plain facts warranted. Lord Granville's criticism dealt almost entirely with petty personal details, with carping objections to the despatches of Government, with charges of inconsistent action, and with insinuations that the Ministry had warped the truth in the accounts which it had given of the origin of the Affghan difficulty. In both Houses the leaders of the Opposition, in the debate on the Address, presented the curious spectacle of persons who had definitely made up their mind, and who yet, by their own confession, were not able to render a reason for their convictions. Lord Cranbrook, however, boldly faced the issues that Lord Granville had scrupled to raise, and in a tone worthy of his position resented the base allegations which Mr Gladstone at Woolwich, and Mr Childers at Pontefract, had made against the despatches.

"I take upon myself," said Lord Cranbrook, "the entire responsibility of the despatch of the 18th November; and I neither apologise for nor retract a single sentence of it—(cheers). The noble earl (Lord Granville) has spoken in a different tone from that which has been held out of doors. I sat with hon. and right hon. gentlemen opposite me in the other House for twenty years, and on no occasion have I known my conduct to be impugned for honesty and integrity. But one of these right hon. gentlemen, in the coarsest invective, has charged me with falsehood; and another has, with more poisonous insinuations, held me up as guilty of that offence. If I have committed the offence which they allege in publishing that despatch—if I have wantonly or deliberately prejudiced the public mind against the late Ministry without truth and reason—I admit the justice of all the attacks which have been made upon me. The question is not whether I arrived at a right or wrong conclusion, but whether I took such fair and reasonable means as I was bound to do in arriving at the conclusion stated in

that despatch—whether I put down that which would fairly arise in one's mind from an examination of the papers before me."

In spite of this challenge to reduce the controversy to a question of facts, and of Lord Salisbury's exposure of the motives on which the personal attacks of the Liberal party were grounded, the discussion on the Address did not rise above personal recrimination on the part of the Liberal peers. As Lord Salisbury pointed out, the policy of the Opposition was to confine itself to small personal attack in order to draw aside the attention of the country from the broad issues before it, so that the fact might be concealed that the main props of the Liberal party had been taking the side of the enemies of their country. The attempt made by Earl Grey to raise the question of prerogative in the declaration of war without consulting Parliament, naturally broke down, as his lordship admitted the prerogative, and did not show that its exercise had been inexpedient in the present instance. The patriotic speech of the Duke of Somerset was of great significance, coming from the Liberal side of the House. It was the most practical rebuke that the Gladstone faction has yet received, and was the only speech on the Opposition benches that frankly stated the difficulties that the Government had to contend with. Lord Northbrook, on the other hand, confined himself to textual criticism of the Government despatch, and never once faced the question on the broad lines of policy. Lord Beaconsfield, therefore, was not unfair when he stated that the House had been compelled to waste its time in an official squabble, while the country was waiting for its deliverance upon a question of vital interest to our future in the East.

The debate in the Commons was even more spiritless than that in the upper House. Lord Hartington in a speech, the moderation and judicial tone of which presented a striking contrast to the invective and personal abuse with which he wound up the debate on the Vote of Censure, took up the same position with Earl Granville, that the Government was wrong, but that they had not had time to get together the proof necessary for its conviction. The speech was one to which, as a piece of Opposition criticism, no objection could have been taken; while the sentiments which he expressed of the necessity for supporting Government, and enabling it to prosecute the war to a speedy issue, met with general commendation. A chief feature in the discussion was the remarkable reticence of Mr Gladstone, who on this occasion waived his usual custom of occupying lines in advance of those taken up by his leader, and who indulged only in a few trifling criticisms of the text of the Queen's speech. Sir Stafford Northcote's vindication of the policy of the Government put very clearly before the House the fallacies on which Lord Hartington's strictures had been founded. He conclusively showed that it was for no question of prestige that we were at war, that it was for no lust of territory, but simply for the safety of our Indian empire. As for Lord Hartington's assertion that we were bent on picking a quarrel with the Ameer, he pointed out that the Government of India had striven to smooth away all cause of offence, but that "the reception of a Russian mission at Cabul at a time when an English mission was refused—and refused on two grounds: one, that they could not receive any mission at all; the other, that if they received an English they must also receive a Russian mission,"—practically left us no alternative but

hostilities. Towards the end of the debate Mr Childers's speech reassured the House that the discreditable language which he had employed at Pontefract was not a mistake into which he had allowed himself to be carried by his feelings on the subject, to be ashamed of afterwards, but studied abuse. The right honourable gentleman, who alone of all the late Cabinet seems able to keep pace with the vehemence of his chief, assailed the Government on the threadbare charge of Lord Cranbrook's 9th paragraph, which he sought by an elaborate argument from analogy to show to be wrong. Altogether, if the debate in the Lords had been unsatisfactory to the country, the discussion in the Commons was still more so, except that it served to bring out the fact of the unanimous view which Ministers took of the Affghan war, and of the thorough grasp which the Cabinet had of the whole question.

With so little encouragement as the discussions on the Address afforded, it is a question whether the Opposition was justified in proceeding with the Vote of Censure at all. From the statements of both Earl Granville and Lord Hartington we may conclude that the Vote of Censure was resolved upon, and notice given of it, before the Opposition had come to any understanding as to the grounds on which it was to be justified. Although we in Britain can estimate a party demonstration at its true value, abroad there is some danger of the public being misled; and it can hardly be gratifying to Earl Granville and Lord Hartington to think that M. Gambetta's organ, the '*République Française*,' feels it necessary to give the members under their leadership a lecture in the duties of patriotism. However, right or wrong, they took the step of censuring the Government, and must now abide by the

result, whether as affecting their influence at home or their credit abroad. In the Lords, the Opposition speakers still played with the real points in the controversy. The chief argument by which Lord Halifax supported his amendment of censure,—that the Government was violating the Treaty of 1855 with Dost Mohammed, and that this was tantamount to a breach of faith, which would be looked upon in the East as an act of spoliation,—was not a happy one. Article III. of that Treaty distinctly engages, on the part of Dost Mohammed and his heirs, that they “are to be the friend of the friends, and enemy of the enemies, of the Honourable East India Company,”—both of which conditions had indisputably been violated by the present Ameer.

It is a remarkable fact that neither Lord Northbrook nor Lord Lawrence made any attempt to close with the main arguments which Lord Cranbrook had put before the House. Lord Lawrence, indeed, offered no defence of his own isolated policy, which had countenanced so much cruel bloodshed in Affghanistan, and had imbued the Ameer with so deeply rooted an idea of British selfishness. The only counsel that Lord Lawrence could offer, was to go back to “Masterly Inactivity,” to take no notice of the Ameer’s insulting conduct, and generally to let events take care of themselves. The only impression his lordship’s speech made was one of profound pain that a statesman to whom Britain owes so much and whom it rates so highly should be so unable to discern the signs of the times. With Lord Northbrook the case is different. In Westminster, as at Simla, his lordship is still summing up in a tone conciliatory to Russia, and in accord with Mr Gladstone’s speeches. How far

successful his lordship has been in the latter respect appears from the tone of his references to his successor, and to the measures which Lord Lytton has been compelled to take to avert the consequences of his—Lord Northbrook’s—treatment of the Ameer. The House had good reason to complain of the line adopted by Lord Northbrook in the debate. He had had better opportunities than any other peer on the side of the Opposition of knowing how serious was the danger which pressed the Government of India to action, how hopeless it was to think of influencing the Ameer, and what contingencies we had to expect if the Ministry stood quietly by and allowed events in High Asia to take their course. And yet Lord Northbrook made no admission that there was any emergency; he entirely left out of sight that there was a side to the Affghan question other than our mere difference with Shere Ali; and he only made use of the knowledge which he had acquired in his official capacity to attack and depreciate the Government and his successor.

The vigorous speech of the Lord Chancellor, on the second night of the debate, effectually cleared away all the irrelevant issues that the Liberal peers had raised, and brought the discussion back to the main question—the change that came over the Ameer’s disposition towards the Government of India during Lord Northbrook’s viceroyalty. He followed up with legal precision the various steps by which the Ameer, repelled by the Viceroy, got deeper and deeper enmeshed in the toils of Russia, until practically he lost the power of choosing for himself between the friendship of the Indian Government and that of General Kauffmann. Another point which the Liberals seemed inclined

to insist on was well disposed of by Lord Cairns. If Russia has really led the Ameer into war, why not punish the stronger Power? Why not declare war against Russia? Mr Gladstone advanced this argument in the other House, but did not say that the Government, in the event of its adopting his suggestion, might rely upon his support. On the contrary, we have no hesitation in saying that, had we sought to make Russia responsible for Shere Ali's infidelity to his engagements with the British Government, Mr Gladstone, had his reason withstood the shock, would have lashed himself and his party into frenzy at the criminality of such conduct! But Lord Cairns was careful to point out that it was with the Ameer, not with Russia, that our quarrel lay. We made no cause of hostilities of his having received a Russian envoy, but of his having refused to receive one from us at the same time. And Russia seems well pleased to accept the distinction which we have drawn. It is, however, a remarkable illustration of the shifts to which party misrepresentation has been recently put, that the very persons who for the last two years have been endeavouring to fasten upon Lord Beaconsfield's Government the charge of seeking to provoke Russia, should now make it a ground of complaint that we do not send her an ultimatum to disavow all connection with Shere Ali's misconduct.

In the Lower House, as in the Lords, there was no real attempt made to grapple with the issues raised by the Government. Indeed, Mr Whitbread and those who followed the same line of argument were careful to avoid closing with Ministers upon those points which they had declared to be the motives of their policy. They avowedly directed their criticism to the

past, and refused to be influenced by any considerations for the future. They contented themselves with bringing home certain charges to the Ministry, and never asked themselves whether, supposing these charges to be proved, the Cabinet had not yet a good excuse for acting as it had done. They narrowed the question to the mere quarrel between the Viceroy and the Ameer, and declined to recognise that this was only one of the elements in the difficulty, and that there were other Powers involved besides Affghanistan.

The debate flagged wofully towards the end, and the device of the Opposition to spread its best speakers over successive nights to protract the discussion, failed to keep up any interest. Certainly there can be no complaint that the Government sought to stifle discussion; for every one who knew anything about the subject was allowed to have his say, as well as those who knew nothing whatever about it. We would scarcely perhaps be justified in including Sir William Harcourt in this latter class; but his speech on the last night of the debate certainly showed that he was far from having mastered the history of our relations with Affghanistan. He attributes the alienation of the Ameer entirely to Lord Lytton, although the Blue-books contain letters from him to Lord Northbrook couched in an unfriendly and insulting tone, and although the Ameer himself distinctly refers all his complaints against the Government of India to the period of Lord Northbrook's viceroyalty. He also makes the mistake of asserting that the Ameer's secret correspondence with Russia began in 1876, and was due to Lord Lytton's menacing attitude. Long before that, our Government was cognisant of Russian missions

to Cabul, of correspondence with the Ameer, and of attempts to draw him into Russian alliance; and, as the Central Asian papers show, not indifferent to these intrigues. Sir William Harcourt was much stronger in his epithets than in his facts; and if "blood-and-thunder policy," the "old red Tory flag," and "bastard imperialism," did not strike terror into the Ministerial benches, the phrases will doubtless prove acceptable additions to the Liberal *répertoire* of abuse, which, in the hands of its present editors, seems likely to undergo an indefinite and enlivening expansion. The speech by which the Marquis of Hartington wound up the debate would require no notice but for the remarkable difference between its tone and that of his remarks on the Address. His language in the first debate was so patriotic, so considerate, and in such excellent taste, as to elicit general compliments from the Opposition press. In the debate on the Vote of Censure, in invective and in vilification of the Viceroy, his harangue went, if possible, beyond Mr Gladstone himself. A very general significance is attached in parliamentary circles to this change of attitude. It is held that Lord Hartington began the session with an earnest desire to keep himself in harmony with the Whig party, to whose sentiments the Duke of Somerset in the Peers gave correct expression; but that, finding the Gladstonian faction too strong for him, he has been compelled reluctantly to swim with the Radical tide.

The other speakers on the Opposition side never once rose above technical criticism, or pointed out any other course that the Government could have pursued with more advantage to the country. When Lord John

Manners, in his spirited and powerful speech in the second night's debate, which entirely carried with it the feelings of the House, put the plain question, "What would the critics of the Indian Government have done had they been in the same position as Lord Lytton?" there was no response hazarded. From the opening to the end of the debates in both Houses, it was evident that the Opposition would not join issue with the Government upon the only ground where discussion was possible — namely, whether the Affghan war was a legitimate measure for the defence of our Indian empire; or whether we could have waived armed interference with the Ameer, and yet saved the honour of the Indian Government and the safety of our north-west frontier? The sweeping majorities in both Houses return the only answer that a British Parliament could have given, and the Liberal party once more discovers that it has succeeded in placing itself in opposition, not so much to Ministers as to the temper of the nation. The result leaves no doubt that the Government is as strong as, if not stronger than, it has been at any previous period, and that the boasts which the Opposition has been making of recent gains, are altogether without foundation.

There are one or two speeches that call for a passing notice, more from intrinsic circumstances than from any influence that they exercised on the debate. The two ex-Ministers gave the Government the full benefit of their opposition, and if they did not both record their votes for the amendment, they both did their best to furnish the assailants of the Government with arguments. The Cabinet is to be congratulated that statesmen who are so indifferent to the credit of

our Indian administration in the eyes of the other kingdoms and states of Asia, and who most certainly had shared in the responsibility of the measures which they now condemn, had ceased to impede its counsels before the present crisis came on. With regard to Lord Derby, the Central Asian papers just published contain conclusive evidence that his resignation did not take place a day too soon for the weighty interests of our Foreign Office. We have ample evidence that it was Lord Salisbury who watched over the Russian advance, and who combated the slippery policy of Prince Gortschakoff in Central Asia, to which the proper head of the Foreign Office seems himself to have been profoundly indifferent. Mr Gladstone's speech, also, has an interest that lies quite apart from the subject of debate. The general impression was, that as the right honourable gentleman had purged himself of so much abuse in the congenial mud of Woolwich quite recently, he would be in a position to treat the House to temperate argument. But this was a mistake. Mr Gladstone seemed disposed to say at his leisure that all the Ministers were liars, —and that was about all that he did say. As the 'Times' pithily remarks of the ex-Premier's "furious anatomy of Blue-books," "it is an unwelcome task, in the presence of so momentous a subject, to notice these passionate accusations; but it will enable us to disregard them for the future; and there is really little else to be said of Mr Gladstone's speech."

The practical solution of the question in Affghanistan itself has been making much more rapid progress than our efforts at home to come to an understanding as to the causes of the war; and it is no small pleasure to be able to turn away

from the display of party passion, unscrupulous misrepresentation, and shifty stratagem that is going on under our eyes, to mark the gallant start that our army has made on the Affghan border. It is there that the real interest of the country is at present centred. It is only natural that the sight of a British army in the field, animated by all the traditional spirit and valour of our service, pressing into the heart of the enemy's country, over mountain ramparts manned by a foe that we have never found unworthy of us, should make us for a time forgetful of party feeling, and arouse whatever is manly and patriotic in the national character. Whatever view may be taken of the objects of the expedition, or of the events which have forced it upon us, there is no Englishman but must feel a pride in noting the bearing of our columns as they make their way up the Affghan passes. We are satisfied now that the Anglo-Indian military spirit is the same as it was in the days of Clive and Wellesley; and that whatever changes our Indian armies may have been subjected to, their old promptness to fight when called upon still remains unchanged. The rapidity with which the Indian Government was able to put so large a force into the field, has made a deep impression upon European military authorities, and is a very high testimony to the efficiency of the local departments. The bond of union between European and native troops has been greatly strengthened by the well-judged policy which brought the latter to Malta. And what is not less important than the condition of our army, we carry with us into Affghanistan the goodwill and even the enthusiastic support of our native subjects, the princes and people of India. The ready assistance which we have received from

the Indian chiefs, has promptly belied the doubts which some little time ago the Russian press was so eager to throw upon their loyalty, and which some of our own newspapers were equally ready to reiterate. It is in vain that Radical agitators have sought to show India that she is badly used in the present business, and that our policy is imposing unwarrantable burdens on her revenues. The national feeling in India is too strongly with the Government to count the cost at present; and the only response that has been returned to the home agitators has come from critics quite as ill-conditioned as themselves, and of equally little influence in their own country.

Up to the present date, our military operations in Affghanistan have been carried on without a single reverse. From the Khyber, from the Kurrum, and from the Bolan Passes, we have penetrated into the heart of the country with trifling loss, and with some notable successes which have done much to dispirit the enemy. The ease with which the important position of Ali Musjid, the key of the Khyber, fell into our hands, gave an auspicious commencement to the campaign; and the brilliant action by which General Roberts carried the Peiwar Pass, occurred just in time to brighten the rather unfortunate circumstances under which Parliament was assembling. The difficulties which were foreseen at the commencement of the campaign have vanished before the march of our troops in a surprising manner. The weather has been our powerful ally, for seldom in the experience of our oldest frontier officers have the passes kept open so far through the winter. The frontier tribes, as we ventured to predict on a previous occasion, have been on the whole friendly to us, and disposed

to help the troops on their way; while the cordial reception our officers have received at Jellalabad gives us ground for believing that the British advance is welcomed as relief from Shere Ali's tyranny. Of course we cannot expect the Affghans to forego the pleasures of "looting" when a favourable opportunity offers; and their nature, always ungovernable and prompt to violence, will doubtless break out into occasional outrages. And although we have already got a commanding footing in the country with comparatively little trouble, we need feel no surprise if some of the tribes make a desperate stand before the final object of our mission is accomplished. On the other hand, there is some probability that our task may be more nearly achieved than we can at present reckon on. Ever since the fall of Ali Musjid first struck the Cabul Durbar with alarm, Shere Ali's position in Cabul must naturally have been growing desperate. He had long ago seen that he has nothing to expect from the assistance of Russia. His means were presumably approaching exhaustion; and his subjects were disaffected, and apparently inclined to resent his conduct in bringing war upon their country. Under these circumstances, the news that Shere Ali had abandoned his capital and taken refuge in Turkistan excites no surprise. At the present moment it would be rash to say whether the flight of the Ameer simplifies or complicates the prospect of a satisfactory settlement. The future of Affghanistan, as well as of our own policy towards it, will mainly depend upon the attitude of Yakoob Khan and the chiefs who still stand by him in Cabul, and who will probably have the good sense to see that a well-timed submission will be very much in their own interests.

An object of the war was, of course, the personal punishment of Shere Ali for his ingratitude and insolence, and that has already been attained by his flight from his capital, to which, we may venture to predict, he will never return as a sovereign. He will now see what Russian promises are worth, and experience the practical estimate of the value which the St Petersburg Government has always set upon its broken tools. We do not apprehend that the Ameer's flight to the Russian confines will be a source of serious misunderstanding between Russia and her Majesty's Government. The former will most probably find that the Ameer can no longer forward her interests, and will try to get rid of him as cheaply as possible. The danger that we most readily foresee would be the establishment of Shere Ali in his Turkistan territories, nominally as an independent sovereign, but really as a Russian vassal, to disturb and annoy whatever system of administration we finally resolve to establish to the south of the Paropamisus. It is to be hoped, however, that the good understanding with Russia which we trust will follow the Affghan expedition, will prevent any such element of instability. As for our

selves, the success of the expedition has already placed us in a position so favourable that we can afford to give or take large concessions. With the Khyber in our hands and Candahar almost within our grasp, we have, in the opinion of so far-seeing a critic as General E. B. Hamley, all the strategical advantages necessary for the safety of our frontier; and there is an evident disposition to give all due weight to the views of so high an authority in the settlement of the military question. A number of other important matters must come up for consideration at the close of the campaign which it would be premature even to indicate at this moment. Everything will depend upon the final issue of the expedition, and the course taken by the Affghan chiefs. It will then be time to discuss how the expenses of the campaign are to be apportioned when we have some data to go by more certain than Mr Fawcett's meddlesome crotchets. There is, however, one question that we trust will finally be set at rest. The Central Asian question, with all the anxiety, bad feeling, and expense which it has brought upon our Indian empire, must, at whatever cost and at whatever hazard, be finally removed from among our causes of political disquiet.

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CHAPTER XLI.—THE FIRST DAY.

THEN came the morning on which Caldigate and Hester must part. Very little had been said about it, but a word or two had been absolutely necessary. The trial would probably take two days, and it would not be well that he should be brought back to Folking for the sad intervening night. And then,—should the verdict be given against him, the prison doors would be closed against her, his wife, more rigidly than against any other friend who might knock at them inquiring after his welfare. Her, at any rate, he would not be allowed to see. All the prison authorities would be bound to regard her as the victim of his crime and as the instrument of his vice. The law would have locked him up to avenge her injuries,—of her, whose only future joy could come from that distant freedom which the fraudulent law would at length allow to him. All this was not put into words between them, but it was understood. It might be that they would be parted now for a term

of years, during which she would be as a widow at Folking while he would be alone in his jail.

There are moments as to which it would be so much better that their coming should never be accomplished! It would have been better for them both had they been separated without that last embrace. He was to start from Folking at eight, that he might surrender himself to the hands of justice in due time for the trial at ten. She did not come down with him to the breakfast parlour, having been requested by him not to be there among the servants when he took his departure; but standing there in her own room, with his baby in her arms, she spoke her last word, "You will keep up your courage, John?"

"I will try, Hester."

"I will keep up mine. I will never fail, for your sake and his,"—here she held the child a moment away from her bosom,—“I will never allow myself to droop. To be your wife and his mother shall be

enough to support me even though you should be torn from both of us for a time."

"I wish I were as brave as you," he said.

"You will leave me here," she continued, "mistress of your house; and if God spares me, here you will find me. They can't move me from this. Your father says so. They may call me what they will, but they cannot move me. There is the Lord above us, and before Him they cannot make me other than your wife,—your wife,—your wife." As she repeated the name, she put the boy out to him, and when he had taken the child, she stretched out her hands upwards, and falling on her knees at his feet, prayed to God for his deliverance. "Let him come back to us, O my God. Deliver him from his enemies, and let him come back to us."

"One kiss, my own," he said, as he raised her from the ground.

"Oh yes;—and a thousand shall be in store for you when you come back to us. Yes; kiss him too. Your boy shall hear the praises of his father every day, till at last he shall understand that he may be proud of you even though he should have learned why it is that you are not with him. Now go, my darling. Go; and support yourself by remembering that I have got that within me which will support me." Then he left her.

The old squire had expressed his intention of being present throughout the trial, and now was ready for the journey. When counselled to remain at home, both by Mr Seely and by his son, he had declared that only by his presence could he make the world around him understand how confident he was of his son's innocence. So it was arranged, and a place was kept for him next to the attorney. The servants all came out into the hall

and shook hands with their young master; and the cook, wiping her eyes with her apron, declared that she would have dinner ready for him on the following day. At the front door Mr Holt was standing, having come over the ferry to greet the young squire before his departure. "They may say what they will there, squire, but they won't make none of us here believe that you've been the man to injure a lady such as she up there." Then there was another shaking of hands, and the father and son got into the carriage.

The court was full, of course. Mr Justice Bramber, by whom the case was to be tried, was reputed to be an excellent judge, a man of no softnesses; able to wear the black cap without convulsive throbings, anxious also that the law should run its course; averse to mercy when guilt had been proved, but as clear-sighted and as just as Minos; a man whom nothing could turn one way or another,—who could hang his friend, but who would certainly not mulct his enemy because he was his enemy. It had reached Caldigate's ears that he was unfortunate in his judge; by which, they who had so said, had intended to imply that this judge's mind would not be perverted by any sentiments as to the prisoner, as to the sweet young woman who called herself his wife at home, or as to want of sweetness on the part of the other woman who claimed him.

The jury was sworn in without more than ordinary delay, and then the trial was commenced. That which had to be done for the prosecution seemed to be simple enough. The first witness called was the woman herself, who was summoned in the names of Euphemia Caldigate *alias* Smith. She gave her evidence very clearly, and with

great composure,—saying how she had become acquainted with the man on board the ship; how she had been engaged to him at Melbourne; how he had come down to her at Sydney; how, in compliance with his orders, she had followed him up to Ahalala; and how she had there been married to him by Mr Allan. Then she brought forth the documents which professed to be the copy of the register of the marriage, made by the minister in his own book; and the envelope,—the damning envelope,—which Caldigate was prepared to admit that he had himself addressed to Mrs Caldigate; and the letter which purported to have been written by the minister to Caldigate, recommending him to be married in some better established township than that existing at Ahalala. She did it well. She was very correct, and at the same time very determined, giving many details of her early theatrical life, which it was thought better to get from her in the comparative ease of a direct examination than to have them extracted afterwards by an adverse advocate. During her evidence in chief, which was necessarily long, she seemed to be quite at ease; but those around her observed that she never once turned her eyes upon him whom she claimed as her husband except when she was asked whether the man there before her was the man she had married at Ahalala. Then, looking at him for a moment in silence, she replied, very steadily, “Yes; that is my husband, John Caldigate.”

To Caldigate and his friends,—and indeed to all those collected in the court,—the most interesting person of the day was Sir John Joram. In a sensational cause the leading barrister for the defence is always the hero of the plot,—the actor from whom the best bit of

acting is expected,—the person who is most likely to become a personage on the occasion. The prisoners are necessarily mute, and can only be looked at, not heard. The judge is not expected to do much till the time comes for his charge, and even then is supposed to lower the dignity of the bench if he makes his charge with any view to effect on his own behalf. The barrister who prosecutes should be tame, or he will appear to be vindictive. The witnesses, however interesting they may be in detail, are but episodes. Each comes and goes, and there is an end of them. But the part of the defending advocate requires action through the whole of the piece. And he may be impassioned. He is bound to be on the alert. Everything seems to depend on him. They who accuse can have or should have no longing for the condemnation of the accused one. But in regard to the other, an acquittal is a matter of personal prowess, of professional triumph, and possibly of well simulated-feeling.

Sir John Joram was at this time a man of considerable dignity, above fifty years of age, having already served the offices of Solicitor and Attorney General to his party. To his compeers and intimate friends it seemed to be but the other day since he was Jacky Joram, one of the jolliest little fellows ever known at an evening party, up to every kind of fun, always rather short of money, and one of whom it was thought that, because he was good-looking, he might some day achieve the success of marrying a woman with money. On a sudden he married a girl without a shilling, and men shook their heads and sighed as they spoke of poor Jacky Joram. But, again, on a sudden,—quite as suddenly,—there came tidings that Jacky had been found out by the attorneys, and that he

was earning his bread. As we grow old things seem to come so quickly! His friends had hardly realised the fact that Jacky was earning his bread before he was in Parliament and had ceased to be Jacky. And the celerity with which he became Sir John was the most astonishing of all. Years no doubt had passed by. But years at fifty are no more than months at thirty,—are less than weeks in boyhood. And now while some tongues, by dint of sheer habit, were still forming themselves into Jacky, Sir John Joram had become the leading advocate of the day, and a man renowned for the dignity of his manners.

In the House,—for he had quite got the ear of the House,—a certain impressive good sense, a habit of saying nothing that was not necessary to the occasion, had chiefly made for him the high character he enjoyed; but in the law courts it was perhaps his complaisance, his peculiar courtesy, of which they who praised him talked the most. His aptitude to get verdicts was of course the cause of his success. But it was observed of him that in perverting the course of justice,—which may be said to be the special work of a successful advocate,—he never condescended to bully anybody. To his own witnesses he was simple and courteous, as are barristers generally. But to adverse witnesses he was more courteous, though no doubt less simple. Even to some perjured comrade of an habitual burglar he would be studiously civil; but to a woman such as Euphemia Caldigate *alias* Smith, it was certain that he would be so smooth as to make her feel almost pleased with the amenities of her position.

He asked her very many questions, offering to provide her with the comfort of a seat if it were

necessary. She said that she was not at all tired, and that she preferred to stand. As to the absolute fact of the marriage she did not hesitate at all. She was married in the tent at Ahalala in the presence of Crinkett and Adamson, and of her own female companion, Anna Young,—all of whom were there to give evidence of the fact. Whether any one else was in the tent she could not say, but she knew that there were others at the entrance. The tent was hardly large enough for more than five or six. Dick Shand had not been there, because he had always been her enemy, and had tried to prevent the marriage. And she was quite clear about the letter. There was a great deal said about the letter. She was sure that the envelope with the letter had come to her at Ahalala by post from Sydney when her husband was at the latter place. The Sydney post-mark with the date was very plain. There was much said as to the accuracy and clearness of the Sydney post-mark, and something as to the absence of any post-mark at Nobble. She could not account for the absence of the Nobble post-mark. She was aware that letters were stamped at Nobble generally. Mr Allan, she said, had himself handed to her the copy of the register almost immediately after the marriage, but she could not say by whom it had been copied. The letter purporting to be from Mr Allan to her husband was no doubt, she said, in the minister's handwriting. Caldigate had showed it to her before their marriage, and she had kept it without any opposition from him. Then she was asked as to her residence after her marriage, and here she was less clear. She had lived with him first at Ahalala and then at Nobble, but she could not say for how long. It had been off and on. There had been

quarrels, and after a time they had agreed to part. She had received from him a certain amount of mining shares and of money, and had undertaken in return never to bother him any more. There was a great deal said about times and dates, which left an impression upon those around her in the court that she was less sure of her facts than a woman in such circumstances naturally would have been.

Then Sir John produced the letter which she had written to Caldigate, and in which she had distinctly offered to marry Crinkett if the money demanded were paid. She must have expected the production of this letter, but still, for a few moments, it silenced her. "Yes," she said at last, "I wrote it."

"And the money you demanded has been paid?"

"Yes, it has been paid. But not then. It was not paid till we came over."

"But if it had been paid then, you would have—married Mr Crinkett?" Sir John's manner as he asked the question was so gentle and so soft that it was felt by all to contain an apology for intruding on so delicate a subject. But when she hesitated, he did, after a pause, renew his inquiry in another form. "Perhaps this was only a threat, and you had no purpose of carrying it out?"

Then she plucked up her courage. "I have not married him," she said.

"But did you intend it?"

"I did. What were the laws to me out there? He had left me and had taken another wife. I had to do the best for myself. I did intend it; but I didn't do it. A woman can't be tried for her intentions."

"No," said Sir John; "but she may be judged by her intentions."

Then she was asked why she had not gone when she had got the money, according to her promise. "He defied us," she said, "and called us bad names,—liars and perjurers. He knew that we were not liars. And then we were watched and told that we might not go. As he said that he was indifferent, I was willing enough to stay and see it out."

"You cannot give us," he asked again,—and this was his last question,—"any clearer record of those months which you lived with your husband?"

"No," she said, "I cannot. I kept no journal." Then she was allowed to go, and though she had been under examination for three hours, it was thought she had escaped easily.

Crinkett was the next, who swore that he had been Caldigate's partner in sundry mining speculations,—that they had been in every way intimate,—that he had always recommended Caldigate to marry Mrs Smith, thinking, as he said, "that respectability paid in the long-run,"—and that, having so advised him, he had become Caldigate's special friend at the time, to the exclusion of Dick Shand, who was generally drunk, and who, whether drunk or sober, was opposed to the marriage. He had been selected to stand by his friend at the marriage, and he, thinking that another witness would be beneficial, had taken Adamson with him. His only wonder was that any one should dispute a fact which was at the time so notorious both at Ahalala and at Nobble. He held his head high during his evidence in chief, and more than once called the prisoner "Caldigate,"—"Caldigate knew this,"—and "Caldigate did that." It was past four when he was handed over for cross-examination; but when it was said

that another hour would suffice for it, the judge agreed to sit for that other hour.

But it was nearly two hours before the gentleman who was with Sir John had finished his work, during which Mr Crinkett seemed to suffer much. The gentleman was by no means so complacent as Sir John, and asked some very disagreeable questions. Had Crinkett intended to commit bigamy by marrying the last witness, knowing at the time that she was a married woman? "I never said that I intended to marry her," said Crinkett. "What she wrote to Caldigate was nothing to me." He could not be made to own, as she had done in a straightforward way, that he had intended to set the law at defiance. His courage failed him, and his presence of mind, and he was made to declare at last that he had only talked about such a marriage, with the view of keeping the woman in good-humour, but that he had never intended to marry her. Then he was asked as to Bollum;—had he told Bollum that he intended to marry the woman? At last he owned that he might have done so. Of course he had been anxious to get his money, and he had thought that he might best do so by such an offer. He was reduced to much misery during his cross-examination; but on the one main statement that he had been present at the marriage he was not shaken.

At six o'clock the trial was adjourned till the next day, and the two Caldigates were taken in a fly

to a neighbouring inn, at which rooms had been provided for them. Here they were soon joined by Mr Seely, who explained, however, that he had come merely to make arrangements for the morrow. "How is it going?" asked Caldigate.

The question was very natural, but it was one which Mr Seely was not disposed to answer. "I couldn't give an opinion," he said. "In such cases I never do give an opinion. The evidence is very clear, and has not been shaken; but the witnesses are people of a bad character. Character goes a long way with a jury. It will depend a good deal on the judge, I should say. But I cannot give an opinion."

No opinion one way or the other was expressed to the father or son,—who indeed saw no one else the whole evening; but Robert Bolton, in discussing the matter with his father, expressed a strong conviction that Caldigate would be acquitted. He had heard it all, and understood the nature of such cases. "I do not in the least doubt that they were married," said Robert Bolton. "All the circumstances make me sure of it. But the witnesses are just of that kind which a jury always distrusts. The jury will acquit him, not because they do not believe the marriage, but out of enmity to Crinkett and the woman."

"What shall we do, then?" asked the old man. To this Robert Bolton could make no answer. He only shook his head and turned away.

CHAPTER XLII.—THE SECOND DAY.

The court had been very full on the first day of the trial, but on the following morning it was even more crowded, so that outsiders who

had no friend connected with justice, had hardly a chance of hearing or seeing anything. Many of the circumstances of the case had

long been known to the public, but matters of new and of peculiar interest had been elicited,—the distinct promise made by the woman to marry another man, so as to render her existing husband safe in his bigamy by committing bigamy herself,—the payment to these people by Caldigate of an immense sum of money,—the fact that they two had lived together in Australia whether married or not;—all this, which had now been acknowledged on both sides, added to the romance of the occasion. While it could hardly be doubted, on the one side, that Caldigate had married the woman,—so strong was the evidence,—it could not be at all doubted, on the other side, that the accusation had been planned with the view of raising money, and had been the result of a base conspiracy. And then there was the additional marvel, that though the money had been paid,—the whole sum demanded,—yet the trial was carried on. The general feeling was exactly that which Robert Bolton had attributed to the jury. People did believe that there had been a marriage, but trusted nevertheless that Caldigate might be acquitted,—so that his recent marriage might be established. No doubt there was a feeling with many that anything done in the wilds of Australia ought not “to count” here, at home in England.

Caldigate with his father was in court a little before ten, and at that hour punctually the trial was recommenced. The first business was the examination of Adamson, who was quite clear as to the marriage. He had been concerned with Crinkett in money operations for many years, and had been asked by him to be present simply as a witness. He had never been particularly intimate with Caldigate, and had had little or nothing to

do with him afterwards. He was cross-examined by the second gentleman, but was not subjected to much annoyance. He had put what little money he possessed into the Polyeuka mine, and had come over to England because he had thought that, by so doing, he might perhaps get a portion of his money back. Had there been a conspiracy, and was he one of the conspirators? Well,—he rather thought that there had been a conspiracy, and that he was one of the conspirators. But then he had conspired only to get what he thought to be his own. He had lost everything in the Polyeuka mine; and as the gentleman no doubt had married the lady, he thought he might as well come forward,—and that perhaps in that way he would get his money. He did not mind saying that he had received a couple of thousand pounds, which was half what he had put into Polyeuka. He hoped that, after paying all his expenses, he would be able to start again at the diggings with something above a thousand. This was all straight sailing. The purpose which he had in view was so manifest that it had hardly been worth while to ask him the questions.

Anna Young was the next, and she encountered the sweet courtesies of Sir John Joram. These sweet courtesies were prolonged for above an hour, and were not apparently very sweet to Miss Young. Of the witnesses hitherto examined she was the worst. She had been flippantly confident in her memories of the marriage ceremony when questioned on behalf of the prosecution, but had forgotten everything in reference to her friend's subsequent married life. She had forgotten even her own life, and did not quite know where she had lived. And at last she positively refused to answer questions though they

were asked with the most engaging civility. She said that, "Of course a lady had affairs which she could not tell to everybody." "No, she didn't mean lovers;—she didn't care for the men at all." "Yes, she did mean money. She had done a little mining, and hoped to do a little more." "She was to have a thousand pounds and her expenses, but she hadn't got the money yet,"—and so on. Probably of all the witnesses yet examined Miss Young had amused the Court the most.

There were many others, no doubt necessary for the case, but hardly necessary for the telling of the story. Captain Munday was there, the captain of the Goldfinder, who spoke of Caldigate's conduct on board, and of his own belief that they two were engaged when they left the ship. "As we are prepared to acknowledge that there was an engagement, I do not think that we need trouble you, Captain Munday," said Sir John. "We only deny the marriage." Then the cheque for twenty thousand pounds was produced, and clerks from the bank to prove the payment, and the old waiter from the Jericho Coffee-house,—and others, of whom Sir John Joram refused to take any notice whatever. All that had been acknowledged. Of course the money had been paid. Of course the intimacy had existed. No doubt there had been those interviews both at Folking and up in London. But had there ever been a marriage in that tent at Ahalala? That, and that only, was the point to which Sir John Joram found it necessary to give attention.

A slight interval was allowed for lunch, and then Sir John rose to begin his speech. It was felt on all sides that his speech was to be the great affair of the trial. Would he be able so to represent these witnesses as to make a jury believe

that they had sworn falsely, and that the undoubted and acknowledged conspiracy to raise money had been concocted without any basis of truth? There was a quarter of an hour during which the father remained with his son in the precincts of the prison, and then the judge and the lawyers, and all they whose places were assured to them trooped back into court. They who were less privileged had fed themselves with pocketed sandwiches, not caring to risk the loss of their seats.

Sir John Joram began by holding, extended in his fingers towards the jury, the envelope which had undoubtedly been addressed by Caldigate to "Mrs Caldigate, Ahalala, Nobble," and in which a certain letter had been stated to have been sent by him to her. "The words written on that envelope," said he, "are to my mind the strongest evidence I have ever met of the folly to which a man may be reduced by the softnesses of feminine intercourse. I acknowledge, on the part of my client, that he wrote these words. I acknowledge that if a man could make a woman his wife by so describing her on a morsel of paper, this man would have made this woman his wife. I acknowledge so much, though I do not acknowledge, though I deny, that any letter was ever sent to this woman in the envelope which I hold in my hand. His own story is that he wrote those words at a moment of soft and foolish confidence, when they two together were talking of a future marriage,—a marriage which no doubt was contemplated, and which probably had been promised. Then he wrote the address, showing the woman the name which would be hers should they ever be married;—and she has craftily kept the document. That is his story. That is my story.

Now I must show you why I think it also should be your story. The woman,—I must describe her in this way lest I should do her an injustice by calling her Mrs Smith, or do my client an injustice by calling her Mrs Caldigate,—has told you that this envelope, with an enclosure which she produced, reached her at Nobble through the post from Sydney. To that statement I call upon you to give no credit. A letter so sent would, as you have been informed, bear two post-marks, those of Sydney and Nobble. This envelope bears one only. But that is not all. I shall call before you two gentlemen experienced in affairs of the post-office, and they will tell you that the post-marks on this envelope, both that of the town, Sydney, and that by which the postage-stamp is obliterated, are cleaner, finer, and better perceived than they would have been had it passed in ordinary course through the post-office. Letters in the post-office are hurried quickly through the operation of stamping, so that one passing over the other while the stamping ink is still moist, will to some extent blot and blur that with which it has come in contact. He will produce some dozens taken at random, and will show that with them all such has been the case. This blotting, this smudging, is very slight, but it exists; it is always there. He will tell you that this envelope has been stamped as one and alone,—by itself,—with peculiar care;—and I shall ask you to believe that the impression has been procured by fraud in the Sydney post-office. If that be so; if in such a case as this fraud be once discovered,—then I say that the whole case will fall to the ground, and that I shall be justified in telling you that no word that you have heard from these four witnesses is worthy of belief.

“Nothing worthy of belief has been adduced against my client unless that envelope be so. That those four persons have conspired together for the sake of getting money is clear enough. To their evidence I shall come presently, and shall endeavour to show you why you should discredit them. At present I am concerned simply with this envelope, on which I think that the case hangs. As for the copy of the register, it is nothing. It would be odd indeed if in any conspiracy so much as that could not be brought up. Had such a register been found in the archives of any church, however humble, and had an attested copy been produced, that would have been much. But this is nothing. Nor is the alleged letter from Mr Allan anything. Were the letter genuine it would show that such a marriage had been contemplated, not that it had been solemnised. We have, however, no evidence to make us believe that the letter is genuine. But this envelope,”—and he again stretched it out towards the jury,—“is evidence. The impression of a post-office stamp has often been accepted as evidence. But the evidence may be false evidence, and it is for us to see whether it may not probably be so now.

“In the first place, such evidence requires peculiar sifting, which unfortunately cannot be applied to it in the present case, because it has been brought to us from a great distance. Had the envelope been in our possession from the moment in which the accusation was first made, we might have tested it, either by sending it to Sydney or by obtaining from Sydney other letters or documents bearing the same stamp, affixed undoubtedly on the date here represented. But that has not been within our power. The gentlemen whom I shall bring

before you will tell you that these impressions or stamps have a knack of verifying themselves, which makes it very dangerous indeed for fraudulent persons to tamper with them. A stamp used in June will be hardly the same as it will be in July. Some little bruise will have so altered a portion of the surface as to enable detection to be made with a microscope. And the stamp used in 1870 will certainly have varied its form in 1871. Now I maintain that time and opportunity should have been given to us to verify this impression. Copies of all impressions from day to day are kept in the Sydney post-office, and if it be found that on this day named, the 10th of May, no impression in the Sydney office is an exact fac-simile of this impression, then I say that this impression has been subsequently and fraudulently obtained, and that the only morsel of corroborative evidence offered to you will be shown to be false evidence. We have been unable to get impressions of this date. Opportunities have not been given to us. But I do not hesitate to tell you that you should demand such opportunities before you accept that envelope as evidence on which you can send my client to jail, and deprive that young wife, whom he has made his own, of her husband, and afford the damning evidence of your verdict towards robbing his son of his legitimacy."

He said very much more about the envelope, clearly showing his own appreciation of its importance, and declaring again and again that if he could show that a stain of perjury affected the evidence in any one point all the evidence must fall to the ground, and that if there were ground to suspect that the envelope had been tampered with, then that stain of perjury would exist. After that he went on to the

four conspirators, as he called them, justifying the name by their acknowledged object of getting money from his client. "That they came to this country as conspirators, with a fraudulent purpose, my learned friend will not deny."

"I acknowledge nothing of the kind," said the learned friend.

"Then my learned friend must feel that his is a case in which he cannot safely acknowledge anything. I do not doubt, gentlemen, but that you have made up your mind on that point." He went on to show that they clearly were conspirators;—that they had confessed as much themselves. "It is no doubt possible that my client may have married this female conspirator, and she is not the less entitled to protection from the law because she is a conspirator. Nor, because she is a conspirator, should he be less amenable to the law for the terrible injury he would then have done to that other lady. But if they be conspirators,—if it be shown to you that they came to this country,—not that the woman might claim her husband, not that the others might give honest testimony against a great delinquent,—but in order that they might frighten him out of money, then I am entitled to tell you that you should not rest on their evidence unless it be supported, and that the fact of their conspiracy gives you a right, nay, makes it your imperative duty, to suspect perjury."

The remainder of the day was taken up with Sir John's speech, and with the witnesses which he called for the defence. He certainly succeeded in strengthening the compassion which was felt for Caldigate and for the unfortunate young mother at Folking. "It was very well," he said, "for my learned friend to tell you of the

protection which is due to a married woman when a husband has broken the law, and betrayed his trust by taking another wife to himself, as this man is accused of having done. But there is another aspect in which you will regard the question. Think of that second wife and of her child, and of the protection which is due to her. You well know that she does not suspect her husband, that she fears nothing but a mistaken verdict from you,—that she will be satisfied, much more than satisfied, if you will leave her in possession of her home, her husband, and the unalloyed domestic happiness she has enjoyed since she joined her lot with his. Look at the one woman, and then at the other. Remember their motives, their different lives, their different joys, and what will be the effect of your verdict upon each of them. If you are satisfied that he did marry that woman, that vile woman, the nature of whose life has been sufficiently exposed to you, of course your verdict must be against him. The law is the law, and must be vindicated. In that case it will be your duty, your terrible duty, to create misery, to destroy happiness, to ruin a dear innocent young mother and her child, and to separate a loving couple, every detail of whose life is such as to demand your sympathy. And this you must do at the bidding of four greedy, foul conspirators. Innocent, sweet, excellent in all feminine graces as is the one wife,—unlovely, unfeminine, and abhorrent as is the other,—you must do your duty. God forbid that I should ask you to break an oath, even for the sake of that young mother. But in such a case, I do think, I may ask you to be very careful as to what evidence you accept. I do think that I may again point out to you that those four witnesses, bound as they are

together by a bond of avarice, should be regarded but as one,—and as one to whose sworn evidence no credit is due unless it be amply corroborated. I say that there is no corroboration. This envelope would be strong corroboration if it had been itself trustworthy.” When he sat down the feeling in court was certainly in favour of John Caldigate.

Then a cloud of witnesses were brought up for the defence, each of whom, however, was soon despatched. The two clerks from the post-office gave exactly the evidence which Sir John had described, and exposed to the jury their packet of old letters. In their opinion the impression on the envelope was finer and cleaner than that generally produced in the course of business. Each of them thought it not improbable that the impression had been surreptitiously obtained. But each of them acknowledged, on cross-examination, that a stamp so clean and perfect might be given and maintained without special care; and each of them said that it was quite possible that a letter passing through the post-office might escape the stamp of one of the offices in which it would be manipulated.

Then there came the witnesses as to character, and evidence was given as to Hester's determination to remain with the man whom she believed to be her husband. As to this there was no cross-examination. That Caldigate's life had been useful and salutary since his return to Folking no one doubted,—nor that he had been a loving husband. If he had committed bigamy, it was, no doubt, for the public welfare that such a crime should be exposed and punished. But that he should have been a bigamist, would be a pity,—oh, such a pity! The pity of it; oh, the pity of it! For now

there had been much talk of Hester and her home at Folking, and her former home at Chesterton; and people everywhere concerned themselves for her peace, for her happiness, for her condition of life.

CHAPTER XLIII.—THE LAST DAY.

After Sir John Joram's speech, and when the work of the second day had been brought to a close, Caldigate allowed his hopes to rise higher than they had ever mounted since he had first become aware that the accusation would in truth be brought against him. It seemed to be almost impossible that any jury should give a verdict in opposition to arguments so convincing as those Sir John had used. All those details which had appeared to himself to be so damning to his own cause now melted away, and seemed to be of no avail. And even Mr Seely, when he came to see his client in the evening, was less oppressive than usual. He did not, indeed, venture to express hope, but in his hopelessness he was somewhat more hopeful than before. "You must remember, Mr Caldigate," he said, "that you have not yet heard the judge; and that with such a jury, Judge Bramber will go much further than any advocate. I never knew a Cambridgeshire jury refuse to be led by Judge Bramber."

"Why a Cambridgeshire jury?" asked old Mr Caldigate; "and why Judge Bramber especially?"

"We are a little timid, I think, here in the eastern counties,—a little wanting in self-confidence. An advocate in the north of England has a finer scope, because the people like to move counter to authority. A Lancashire jury will generally be unwilling to do what a judge tells them. And then Judge Bramber has a peculiar way of telling a jury. If he has a strong opinion of his own he never

leaves the jury in doubt about it. Some judges are—what I call flabby, Mr Caldigate. They are a little afraid of responsibility, and leave the jury and the counsel to fight it out among them. Sir John did it very well, no doubt,—very well. He made the best he could of that postage-stamp, though I don't know that it will go for much. The point most in our favour is that those Australians are a rough lot to look at. The woman has been drinking, and has lost her good looks,—so that the jurymen won't be soft about her." Caldigate, when he heard this, thought of Euphemia Smith on board the Goldfinder, when she certainly did not drink, when her personal appearance was certainly such as might touch the heart of any jurymen. Gold and drink together had so changed the woman that he could hardly persuade himself that she was that forlorn attractive female whom he had once so nearly loved.

Before he went to bed, Caldigate wrote to his wife as he had done also on the preceding evening. "There is to be another long, tedious, terrible day, and then it may be that I shall be able to write no more. For your sake, almost more than for my own, I am longing for it to be over. It would be vain for me to attempt to tell you all that took place. I do not dare to give you hope which I know may be fallacious. And yet I feel my own heart somewhat higher than it was when I wrote last night." Then he did tell her something of what had taken place, speaking in high praise of Sir John Joram. "And

now my own, own wife, my real wife, my beloved one, I have to call you so, perhaps for the last time for years. If these men shall choose to think that I married that woman, we shall have to be so parted that it would be better for us to be in our graves. But even then I will not give up all hope. My father has promised that the whole colony shall be ransacked till proof be found of the truth. And then, though I shall have been convicted, I shall be reinstated in my position as your husband. May God Almighty bless you, and our boy, till I may come again to claim my wife and my child without disgrace."

The old man had made the promise. "I would go myself," said he, "were it not that Hester will want my support here." For there had been another promise made,—that by no entreaty, no guile, no force, should Hester be taken from Folkington to Chesterton.

Early on the third day Judge Bramber began his charge, and in doing so he told the jury that it would occupy him about three hours. And in exactly three hours' time he had completed his task. In summing up the case he certainly was not "flabby;"—so little so, that he left no doubt on the minds of any who heard him of the verdict at which he had himself arrived. He went through the evidence of the four chief witnesses very carefully, and then said that the antecedents of these people, or even their guilt, if they had been guilty, had nothing to do with the case except in so far as it might affect the opinion of the jury as to their veracity. They had been called conspirators. Even though they had conspired to raise money by threats, than which nothing could be more abominable,—even though by doing so they should have subjected themselves to criminal pro-

ceedings, and to many penalties,—that would not lessen the criminality of the accused if such a marriage as that described had in truth taken place. "This," said the judge, "is so much a matter of course, that I should not insist upon it had it not been implied that the testimony of these four persons is worth nothing because they are conspirators. It is for you to judge what their testimony is worth, and it is for you to remember that they are four distinct witnesses, all swearing to the same thing." Then he went into the question of the money. There could be no doubt that the four persons had come to England with the purpose of getting money out of the accused, and that they had succeeded. With their mode of doing this,—whether criminal or innocent,—the jury had nothing to do, except as it affected their credit. But they were bound to look to Caldigate's motive in paying so large a sum. It had been shown that he did not owe them a shilling, and that when the application for money reached him from Australia he had refused to give them a shilling. Then, when they had arrived here in England, accusation was made; and when they had offered to desert the case if paid the money, then the money was paid. The prisoner, when paying it, had no doubt intimated to those who received it that he made no bargain with them as to their going away. And he had taken a friend with him who had given his evidence in court, and this friend had manifestly been taken to show that the money was not secretly paid. The jury would give the prisoner the benefit of all that,—if there was benefit to be derived from it. But they were bound to remember, in coming to their verdict, that a very large sum of money had been paid to the witnesses by the prisoner,

which money certainly was not due to them.

He dwelt, also, at great length on the stamp on the envelope, but contrived at last to leave a feeling on the minds of those who heard him, that Sir John had shown the weakness of his case by trusting so much to such allegations as he had made. "It has been represented," said Judge Bramber, "that the impression which you have seen of the Sydney post-office stamp has been fraudulently obtained. Some stronger evidence should, I think, be shown of this before you believe it. Two clerks from the London post-office have told you that they believed the impression to be a false one; but I think they were hardly justified in their opinion. They founded it on the clearness and cleanness of the impression; but they both of them acknowledged afterwards that such clearness and cleanness are simply unusual, and by no means impossible,—not indeed improbable. But how would it have been if the envelope had been brought to you without any post-office impression, simply directed to Mrs Caldigate, by the man who is alleged to have made the woman his wife shortly before the envelope was written? Would it not in that case have been strong evidence? If any fraud were proved,—such a fraud as would be that of getting some post-office official falsely to stamp the envelope,—then the stain of perjury would be there. But it will be for you to consider whether you can find such stain of perjury merely because the impression on the envelope is clear and clean."

When he came to the present condition of Caldigate's wife and child at Folking, he was very tender in his speech,—but even his tenderness seemed to turn itself against the accused.

"Of that poor lady I can only speak with that unfeigned respect which I am sure you all feel. That she was happy in her marriage till this accusation reached her ears, no one can doubt. That he to whom she was given in marriage has done his duty by her, treating her with full affection and confidence, has been proved to us. Who can think that such a condition of things shall be disturbed, that happiness so perfect is to be turned to misery and misfortune, without almost an agony of regret? But not on that account can you be in any way released from your duty. In this case you are not entitled to think of the happiness or unhappiness of individuals. You have to confine yourself to the evidence, and must give your verdict in accordance with that."

John Caldigate, as he heard the words, told himself at once that the judge had, in fact, desired the jury to find a verdict against him. Not a single point had been made in his favour, and every point had been made to tell against him. The judge had almost said that a man's promise to marry a woman should be taken as evidence of marriage. But the jury, at any rate, did not show immediate alacrity in obeying the judge's behest. They returned once or twice to ask questions; and at three o'clock Caldigate was allowed to go to his inn, with an intimation that he must hold himself in readiness to be brought back and hear the verdict at a moment's notice. "I wish they would declare it at once," he said to his father. "The suspense is worse than all."

During the afternoon the matter was discussed very freely throughout the borough. "I thought they would have agreed almost at once," said the mayor, at about four o'clock,

to Mr Seely, who, at this moment, had retired to his own office, where the great magistrate of the borough was closeted with him. The mayor had been seated on the bench throughout the trial, and had taken much interest in the case. "I never imagined that there could be much doubt after Judge Bramber's summing up."

"I hear that there's one man holding out," said the attorney, in a low voice.

"Who is it?" whispered the mayor. The mayor and Mr Seely were very intimate.

"I suppose it's Jones, the tanner at Ely. They say that the Caldigates have had dealings with his family from generation to generation. I knew all about it, and when they passed his name, I wondered that Burder hadn't been sharper." Mr Burder was the gentleman who had got up the prosecution on the part of the Crown.

"It must be something of that kind," said the mayor. "Nothing else would make a jury hesitate after such a charge as that. I suppose he did marry her." Mr Seely shrugged his shoulders. "I have attended very closely to the case, and I know I should have been against him on a jury. God bless my soul! did any man ever write to a woman as his wife without having married her?"

"It has been done, I should think."

"And that nobody should have been got to say that they weren't man and wife."

"I really have hardly formed an opinion," said Mr Seely, still whispering. "I am inclined to think that there was probably some ceremony, and that Caldigate saved his conscience, when he married Bolton's daughter, by an idea that the ceremony wasn't valid. But they'll convict him at last. When

he told me that he had been up to town and paid that money, I knew it was all up with him. How can any juryman believe that a man will pay twenty thousand pounds, which he doesn't owe, to his sworn enemy, merely on a point of conscience?"

At the same time the old banker was sitting in his room at the bank, and Robert Bolton was with him. "There cannot be a doubt of his guilt," said Robert Bolton.

"No, no,—not a doubt."

"But the jury may disagree?"

"What shall we do then?" said the banker.

"There must be another trial. We must go on till we get a verdict."

"And Hester? What can we do for Hester?"

"She is very obstinate, and I fear we have no power. Even though she is declared not to be his wife, she can choose her own place of living. If he is convicted, I think that she would come back. Of course she ought to come back."

"Of course, of course."

"Old Caldigate, too, is very obstinate; but it may be that we should be able to persuade him. He will know that she ought to be with her mother."

"Her poor mother! her poor mother! And when he comes out of prison?"

"Her very nature will have been altered by that time," said the attorney. "She will, I trust, have consented before that to take up her residence under your roof."

"I shall be dead," said the old man. "Disgrace and years together will have killed me before that time comes."

The Smirkies were staying at Babington, and the desire for news there was very intent. Mr Smirkie was full of thought on the matter, but was manifestly in favour of a

conviction. "Yes; the poor young woman is very much to be pitied," he said, in answer to the squire, who had ventured to utter a word in favour of Hester. "A young woman who falls into the hands of an evil man must always be pitied; but it is to prevent the evil men from preying upon the weaker sex that examples such as these are needed. When we think what might have been the case here, in this house, we have all of us a peculiar reason to be thankful for the interposition of divine Providence." Here Mr Smirkie made a little gesture of thanksgiving, thanking Heaven for its goodness to his wife in having given her himself. "Julia, my love, you have a very peculiar reason to be thankful, and I trust you are so. Yes,—we must pity the poor young lady; but it will be well that the offender should be made subject to the outraged laws of his country." Mrs Smirkie, as she listened to these eloquent words, closed her eyes and hands in token of her thankfulness for all that Providence had done for her.

If she knew how to compare her condition with that of poor Hester at this time, she had indeed cause for thankfulness. Hester was alone with her baby, and with no information but what had been conveyed to her by her husband's letters. As she read the last of the two she acknowledged to herself that too probably she would not even see his handwriting again till the period of his punishment should have expired. And then? What would come then? Sitting alone, at the open window of her bedroom, with her boy on her lap, she endeavoured to realise her own position. She would be a mother, without a husband,—with her bastard child. However innocent he might be, such would be her posi-

tion under the law. It did not suffice that they two should be man and wife as thoroughly as any whom God had joined together, if twelve men assembled together in a jury-box should say otherwise. She had told him that she would be brave;—but how should she be brave in such a condition as this? What should she do? How should she look forward to the time of his release? Could anything ever again give her back her husband, and make him her own in the eyes of men? Could anything make men believe that he had always been her own, and that there had been no flaw? She had been very brave when they had attempted to confine her, to hold her by force at Chesterton. Then she had been made strong, had almost been comforted, by opposition. The determination of her purpose to go back had supported her. But now,—how should it be with her now? and with her boy? and with him?

The old man was very good, good and eager in her cause, and would let her live at Folking. But what would they call her? When they wrote to her from Chesterton, how would they address her letters? Never, never would she soil her fingers by touching a document that called her by any other name than her own. Yes, her own;—let all the jurymen in all the counties, let all the judges on the bench, say what they would to the contrary. Though it should be for all her life,—though there should never come the day on which they,—they,—the world at large, would do him justice and her,—though they should call her by what hard name they would, still up there, in the courts of her God, she would be his wife. She would be a pure woman there, and there would her child be without a stain. And here, here in this world, though she could never

more be a wife in all things, she would be a wife in love, a wife in care, a wife in obedience, a wife in all godly truth. And though it would never be possible for her to show her face again among mankind, never for her, surely the world would be kinder to her boy! They would not begrudge him his name! And when it should be told how it had come to pass that there was a blot upon his escutcheon, they would not remind him of his mother's misery. But, above all, there should be no shade of doubt as to her husband. "I know," she said, speaking aloud, but not knowing that she spoke aloud,— "I know that he is my husband." Then there was a knock at the door. "Well; yes;—has it come? Do you know?"

No; nothing was known there at that moment, but in another minute all would be known. The wheels of the old squire's carriage had been heard upon the gravel. "No, ma'am, no; you shall not leave the room," said the nurse. "Stay here, and let him come to you."

"Is he alone?" she asked. But the woman did not know. The wheels of the carriage had only been heard.

Alas! alas! he was alone. His heart, too, had been almost broken as he bore the news home to the wife who was a wife no longer.

"Father!" she said, when she saw him.

"My daughter!—O my daughter!"

And then, with their hands clasped together, they sat speechless and alone, while the news was spread through the household which the old man did not dare to tell to his son's wife.

It was very slowly that the actual tidings reached her ears. Mr Caldigate, when he tried to tell them, found that the power of words had left him. Old as he was, and prone to cynic indifference as he had shown himself, he was affected almost like a young girl. He sobbed convulsively as he hung over her, embracing her. "My daughter!" he said,— "my daughter! my daughter!"

But at last it was all told. Caldigate had been declared guilty, and the judge had condemned him to be confined in prison for two years. Judge Bramber had told him that, in his opinion, the jury could have found no other verdict; but he went on to say that, looking for some excuse for so terrible a deed as that which had been done,—so terrible for that poor lady who was now left nameless with a nameless infant,—he could imagine that the marriage, though legally solemnised, had nevertheless been so deficient in the appearances of solemnity as to have imbued the husband with the idea that it had not meant all that a marriage would have meant if celebrated in a church and with more of the outward appurtenances of religion. On that account he refrained from inflicting a severer penalty.

CHAPTER XLIV.—AFTER THE VERDICT.

When the verdict was given, Caldigate was at once marched round into the dock, having hitherto been allowed to sit in front of the dock between Mr Seely and his father. But, stand-

ing in the dock, he heard the sentence pronounced upon him. "I never married the woman, my lord," he said, in a loud voice. But what he said could be of no avail. And then men looked at

him as he disappeared with the jailers down the steps leading to regions below, and away to his prison, and they knew that he would no more be seen or heard of for two years. He had vanished. But there was the lady who was not his wife out at Folking,—the lady whom the jury had declared not to be his wife. What would become of her?

There was an old gentleman there in the court who had known Mr Caldigate for many years,—one Mr Ryder, who had been himself a practising barrister, but had now retired. In those days they seldom saw each other; but, nevertheless, they were friends. "Caldigate," he said, "you had better let her go back to her own people."

"She shall stay with me," he replied.

"Better not. Believe me, she had better not. If so, how will it be with her when he is released? The two years will soon go by, and then she will be in his house. If that woman should die, he might marry her,—but till then she had better be with her own people."

"She shall stay with me," the old man said again, repeating the words angrily, and shaking his head. He was so stunned by the blow that he could not argue the matter, but he knew that he had made the promise, and that he was resolved to abide by it.

She had better go back to her own people! All the world was saying it. She had no husband now. Everybody would respect her misfortune. Everybody would acknowledge her innocence. All would sympathise with her. All would love her. But she must go back to her own people. There was not a dissentient voice. "Of course she must go back to you now," Nicholas Bolton said to her father, and Nicholas Bolton seldom inter-

fered in anything. "The poor lady will of course be restored to her family," the judge had said in private to his marshal, and the marshal had of course made known what the judge had said. On the next morning there came a letter from William Bolton to Robert. "Of course Hester must come back now. Nothing else is possible." Everybody decided that she must come back. It was a matter which admitted of no doubt. But how was she to be brought to Chesterton?

None of them who decided with so much confidence as to her future, understood her ideas of her position as a wife. "I am bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh," she said to herself,—*"made so by a sacrament which no jury can touch."* What matters what the people say? They may make me more unhappy than I am,—they may kill me by their cruelty; but they cannot make me believe myself not to be his wife. And while I am his wife, I will obey him, and him only."

What she called "their cruelty" manifested itself very soon. The first person who came to her was Mrs Robert Bolton, and her visit was made on the day after the verdict. When Hester sent down word begging to be permitted in her misery to decline to see even her sister-in-law, Mrs Robert sent her up a word or two written in pencil—"My darling, whom have you nearer? Who loves you better than I?" Then the wretched one gave way, and allowed her brother's wife to be brought to her. She was already dressed from head to foot in black, and her baby was with her.

The arguments which Mrs Robert Bolton used need not be repeated, but it may be said that the words she used were so tender, and that they were urged with so much love, so much sympathy, and so much

personal approval, that Hester's heart was touched. "But he is my husband," Hester said. "The judge cannot alter it; he is my husband."

"I will not say a word to the contrary. But the law has separated you, and you should obey the law. You should not even eat his bread now, because,—because——. Oh, Hester, you understand."

"I do understand," she said, rising to her feet in her energy; "and I will eat his bread though it be hard, and I will drink of his cup though it be bitter. His bread and his cup shall be mine, and none other shall be mine. I do understand. I know that these wicked people have blasted my life. I know that I can be nothing to him now. But his child shall never be made to think that his mother had condemned his father." "Yes, Margaret," she said again, "I do love you, and I do trust you, and I know that you love me. But you do not love him; you do not believe in him. If they came to you and took Robert away, would you go and live with other people? I do love papa and mamma. But this is his house, and he bids me stay here. The very clothes which I wear are his clothes. I am his; and though they were to cut me apart from him, still I should belong to him. No,—I will not go to mamma. Of course I have forgiven her, because she meant it for the best; but I will never go back to Chesterton."

Then there came letters from the mother, one letter hot upon the other, all appealing to those texts in Scripture by which the laws of nations are supposed to be supported. "Give unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's." It was for the law to declare who were and who were not man and wife, and in this matter the law had

declared. After this how could she doubt? Or how could she hesitate as to tearing herself away from the belongings of the man who certainly was not her husband? And there were dreadful words in these letters which added much to the agony of her who received them,—words which were used in order that their strength might prevail. But they had no strength to convert, though they had strength to afflict. Then Mrs Bolton, who in her anxiety was ready to submit herself to any personal discomfort, prepared to go to Folking. But Hester sent back word that, in her present condition, she would see nobody,—not even her mother.

But it was not only from the family of the Boltons that these applications and entreaties came. Even Mr Seely took upon himself to tell Mr Caldigate that under existing circumstances Hester should not be detained at Folking.

"I do not know that either she or I want advice in the matter," Mr Caldigate replied. But as a stone will be worn hollow in time by the droppings of many waters, so was it thought that if all Cambridge would continue firm in its purpose, then this stone might at last be made to yield. The world was so anxious that it resolved among itself that it would submit to any amount of snubbing in carrying out its object. Even the mayor wrote,—*"Dear Mr Caldigate, greatly as I object to all interference in families, I think myself bound to appeal to you as to the unfortunate condition of that young lady from Chesterton."* Then followed all the arguments, and some of the texts,—both of which were gradually becoming hackneyed in the matter. Mr Caldigate's answer to this was very characteristic: *"Dear Mr Mayor, if you*

have an objection to interfere in families, why do you do it?" The mayor took the rebuke with placid good-humour, feeling that his little drop might also have done something towards hollowing the stone.

But of all the counsellors, perhaps Mr Smirkie was the most zealous and the most trusting. He felt himself to be bound in a peculiar manner to Folking,—by double ties. Was not the clergyman of the parish the brother of his dear departed one? And with whom better could he hold sweet counsel? And then that second dear one, who had just been vouchsafed to him,—had she not, as it were by a miracle, been rescued from the fate into which the other poor lady had fallen, and obtained her present thoroughly satisfactory position? Mr Smirkie was a clergyman who understood it to be his duty to be urgent for the good cause, in season and out of season, and who always did his duty. So he travelled over to Utterden and discussed the matter at great length with Mr Bromley. "I do believe in my heart," said Mr Bromley, "that the verdict is wrong." But Mr Smirkie, with much eloquence, averred that that had nothing to do with the question. Mr Bromley opened his eyes very wide. "Nothing at all," said Mr Smirkie. "It is the verdict of the jury, confirmed by the judge; and the verdict itself dissolves the marriage. Whether the verdict be wrong or right, that marriage ceremony is null and void. They are not man and wife;—not now, even if they ever were. Of course you are aware of that."

Mr Smirkie was altogether wrong in his law. Such men generally are. Mr Bromley in vain endeavoured to point out to him that the verdict could have no such power as was here claimed for it, and that if any claim was to be brought up

hereafter as to the legitimacy of the child, the fact of the verdict could only be used as evidence, and that that evidence would or would not be regarded as true by another jury, according to the views which that other jury might take. Mr Smirkie would only repeat his statements with increased solemnity,—“That marriage is no marriage. That poor lady is not Mrs John Caldigate. She is Miss Hester Bolton, and therefore, every breath of air which she draws under that roof is a sin.” As he said this out upon the dike-side, he looked about him with manifest regret that he had no other audience than his brother-in-law.

And at last, after much persevering assiduity, Mr Smirkie succeeded in reaching Mr Caldigate himself, and expressed himself with boldness. He was a man who had at any rate the courage of his opinions. “You have to think of her future life in this world and in the next,” he said. “And in the next,” he repeated with emphasis, when Mr Caldigate paused.

“As to what will affect her happiness in this world, sir,” said the old man very gravely, “I think you can hardly be a judge.”

“Good repute,” suggested the clergyman.

“Has she done anything that ought to lessen the fair fame of a woman in the estimation of other women? And as to the next world, in the rewards and punishments of which you presume it to be your peculiar duty to deal, has she done anything which you think will subject her to the special wrath of an offended Deity?” This question he asked with a vehemence of voice which astounded his companion. “She has loved her husband with a peculiar love,” he continued. “She has believed herself to be joined to him by ties which you

shall call romantic, if you will,—superstitious, if you will.”

“I hope not,—I hope not,” said Mr Smirkie, holding up both his hands, not at all understanding the old man’s meaning, but intending to express horror at “superstition,” which he supposed to be a peculiar attribute of the Roman Catholic branch of the Christian Church. “Not that, I hope.”

“I cannot fathom, and you, apparently, cannot at all understand, her idea of the sanctity of the marriage vow. But if you knew anything about her, I think you would refrain from threatening her with divine wrath; and as you know nothing about her, I regard such threats, coming from you, as impertinent, unmanly, inhuman, and blasphemous.” Mr Caldigate had commenced this conversation, though vehemently, still in so argumentative a manner, and in his allusions to the lady’s romantic and superstitious ideas had seemed to yield so much, that the terrible vigour of his last words struck the poor clergyman almost to the ground. One epithet came out after another, very clearly spoken, with a pause between each of them; and the speaker, as he uttered them, looked his victim close in the face. Then he walked slowly away, leaving Mr Smirkie fixed to the ground. What had he done? He had simply made a gentle allusion to the next world, as, surely, it was his duty to do. Whether this old pagan did or did not believe in a next world himself, he must at any rate be aware that it is the peculiar business of a clergyman to make such references. As to “impertinent” and “unmanly,” he would let them go by. He was, he conceived, bound by his calling to be what people called impertinent, and manliness had nothing to do with him. But “inhuman” and “blasphem-

ous!” Why had he come all the way over from Plum-cum-Pippins, at considerable personal expense, except in furtherance of that highest humanity which concerns itself with eternity? And as for blasphemy, it might, he thought, as well be said that he was blasphemous whenever he read the Bible aloud to his flock! His first idea was to write an exhaustive letter on the subject to Mr Caldigate, in which he would invite that gentleman to recall the offensive words. But as he drove his gig into the parsonage yard at Plum-cum-Pippins, he made up his mind that this, too, was among the things which a Christian minister should bear with patience.

But the dropping water always does hollow the stone,—hollow it a little, though the impression may not be visible to the naked eye. Even when rising in his wrath, Mr Caldigate had crushed the clergyman by the violence of his language,—having been excited to anger chiefly by the thick-headedness of the man in not having understood the rebuke intended to be conveyed by his earlier and gentler words,—even when leaving the man, with a full conviction that the man was crushed, the old squire was aware that he, the stone, was being gradually hollowed. Hester was now very dear to him. From the first she had suited his ideas of a wife for his son. And her constancy in her misery had wound itself into his heart. He quite understood that her welfare should now be his great care. There was no one else from whom she would listen to a word of advice. From her husband, whose slightest word would have been a law to her, no word could now come. From her own family she was entirely estranged, having been taught to regard them simply as enemies in this matter. She loved her mother;

but in this matter her mother was her declared enemy. His voice, and his voice alone, could now reach her ears. As to that great hereafter to which the clergyman had so flippantly alluded, he was content to leave that to herself. Much as he differed from her as to details of a creed, he felt sure that she was safe there. To his thinking, she was the purest human being that had ever come beneath his notice. Whatever portion of bliss there may be for mankind in a life after this life, the fullest portion of that bliss would be hers, whether by reason of her creed or in spite of it. Accustomed to think much of things, it was thus that he thought of her in reference to the world to come. But as to this world, he was not quite so sure. If she could die and have that other bliss at once, that would be best,—only for the child, only for the child! But he did doubt. Would it do for her to ignore that verdict altogether, when his son should be released from jail, and be to him as though there had been no verdict? Would not the finger of scorn be pointed at her; and,—as he thought of it,—possibly at future children? Might it not be better for her to bow to the cruelty of Fate, and consent to be apart from him at any rate while that woman should be alive? And again, if such would be better, then was it not clear that no time should be lost in beginning that new life? If at last it should be ruled that she must go back to her mother, it would certainly be well that she should do so now, at once, so that people might know that she had yielded to the verdict. In this way the stone was hollowed,—though the hollowing had not been made visible to the naked eye of Mr Smirkie.

He was a man whose conscience did not easily let him rest when he

believed that a duty was incumbent on him. It was his duty now, he thought, not to bid her go, not to advise her to go,—but to put before her what reasons there might be for her going.

“I am telling you,” he said, “what other people say.”

“I do not regard what other people say.”

“That might be possible for a man, Hester, but a woman has to regard what the world says. You are young, and may have a long life before you. We cannot hide from ourselves the fact that a most terrible misfortune has fallen upon you, altogether undeserved, but very grievous.”

“God, when he gave me my husband,” she replied, “did me more good than any man can do me harm by taking him away. I never cease to tell myself that the blessing is greater than the misfortune.”

“But, my dearest——”

“I know it all, father. I know what you would tell me. If I live here after he comes out of prison people will say that I am his mistress.”

“Not that, not that,” he cried, unable to bear the contumely of the word, even from her lips.

“Yes, father; that is what you mean. That is what they all mean. That is what mamma means, and Margaret. Let them call me what they will. It is not what they call me, but what I am. It is bad for a woman to have evil said of her, but it is worse for her to do evil. It is your house, and you, of course, can bid me go.”

“I will never do that.”

“But unless I am turned out homeless on to the roads, I will stay here where he left me. I have only one sure way of doing right, and that is to obey him as closely as I can. He cannot order me now, but he has left his orders. He has

told me to remain under this roof, and to call myself by his name, and in no way to derogate from my own honour as his wife. By God's help I will do as he bids me. Nothing that any of them can say shall turn me an inch from the way he has pointed out. You are good to me."

"I will try to be good to you."

"You are so good to me that I

can hardly understand your goodness. Trusting to that, I will wait here till he shall come again and tell me where and how I am to live."

After that the old squire made no further attempt in the same direction, finding that no slightest hollow had been made on that other stone.

CHAPTER XLV.—THE BOLTONS ARE MUCH TROUBLED.

The condition of the inhabitants of Puritan Grange during the six weeks immediately after the verdict was very sad indeed. I have described badly the character of the lady living there, if I have induced my readers to think that her heart was hardened against her daughter. She was a woman of strong convictions and bitter prejudices; but her heart was soft enough. When she married, circumstances had separated her widely from her own family, in which she had never known either a brother or a sister; and the burden of her marriage with an old man had been brightened to her by the possession of an only child,—of one daughter, who had been the lamp of her life, the solitary delight of her heart, the single relief to the otherwise solitary tedium of her monotonous existence. She had, indeed, attended to the religious training of her girl with constant care;—but the yearnings of her maternal heart had softened even her religion, so that the laws, and dogmas, and texts, and exercises by which her husband was oppressed, and her servants afflicted, had been made lighter for Hester,—sometimes not without pangs of conscience on the part of the self-convinced parent. She had known, as well as other mothers, how to gloat over the sweet charms of the one thing which in all the world had

been quite her own. She had revelled in kisses and soft touches. Her Hester's garments had been a delight to her, till she had taught herself to think that though sackcloth and ashes were the proper wear for herself and her husband, nothing was too soft, too silken, too delicate for her little girl. The roses in the garden, and the goldfish in the bowl, and the pet spaniel, had been there because such surroundings had been needed for the joyousness of her girl. And the theological hardness of the literature of the house had been somewhat mitigated as Hester grew into reading, so that Watts was occasionally relieved by Wordsworth, and Thomson's 'Seasons' was alternated with George Wither's 'Hallelujah.'

Then had come, first the idea of the marriage, and, immediately consequent upon the idea, the marriage itself. The story of that has been told, but the reader has perhaps hardly been made to understand the utter bereavement which it brought on the mother. It is natural that the adult bird should delight to leave the family nest, and that the mother bird should have its heart-strings torn by the separation. It must be so, alas! even when the divulsions are made in the happiest manner. But here the tearing away had nothing in it to reconcile

the mother. She was suddenly told that her daughter was to be no longer her own. Her step-son had interfered, and her husband had become powerful over her with a sudden obstinacy. She had had no hand in the choice. She would fain have postponed any choice, and would then fain have herself made the choice. But a man was brought who was distasteful to her at all points, and she was told that that man was to have her daughter! He was thoroughly distasteful! He had been a spendthrift and a gambler;—then a seeker after gold in wild, godless countries, and, to her thinking, not at all the better because he had been a successful seeker. She believed the man to be an atheist. She was told that his father was an infidel, and was ready to believe the worst of the son. And yet in this terrible emergency she was powerless. The girl was allowed to see the man, and declared almost at once that she would transfer herself from her mother's keeping to the keeping of this wicked one! She was transferred, and the mother had been left alone.

Then came the blow,—very quickly; the blow which, as she now told herself morning, noon, and night, was no worse than she had expected. Another woman claimed the man as her husband, and so claimed him that the world all around her had declared that the claim would be made good. And the man himself had owned enough to make him unfit,—as she thought,—to have the custody of any honest woman. Then she acknowledged to herself the full weight of the misfortune that had fallen upon them,—the misfortune which never would have fallen upon them had they listened to her counsel; and she had immediately put her shoulders to the wheel with the object

of rescuing her child from the perils, from the sin, from the degradation of her position. And could she have rescued her, could she have induced her daughter to remain at Puritan Grange, there would even then have been consolation. It was one of the tenets of her life,—the strongest, perhaps, of all those doctrines on which she built her faith,—that this world is a world of woe; that wailing and suffering, if not gnashing of teeth, is and should be the condition of mankind preparatory to eternal bliss. For eternal bliss there could, she thought, be no other preparation. She did not want to be happy here, or to have those happy around her whom she loved. She had stumbled and gone astray,—she told herself hourly now that she had stumbled and gone astray,—in preparing those roses and ribbons, and other lightnesses, for her young girl. It should have been all sackcloth and ashes. Had it been all sackcloth and ashes there would not have been this terrible fall. But if the loved one would now come back to sackcloth and ashes,—if she would assent to the blackness of religious asceticism, to penitence and theological gloom, and would lead the life of the godly but comfortless here in order that she might insure the glories and joys of the future life, then there might be consolation;—then it might be felt that this tribulation had been a precious balm by which an erring soul had been brought back to its due humility.

But Wordsworth and Thomson, though upon the whole moral poets, had done their work. Or, if not done altogether by them, the work had been done by the latitude which had admitted them. So that the young wife, when she found herself breathing the free air with which her husband surrounded her, was able to burst asunder the rem-

nants of those cords of fanaticism with which her mother had endeavoured to constrain her. She looked abroad, and soon taught herself to feel that the world was bright and merry; that this mortal life was by no means necessarily a place of gloom; and the companionship of the man to whom Providence had allotted her was to her so happy, so enjoyable, so sufficient, that she found herself to have escaped from a dark prison and to be roaming among shrubs, and flowers, and running waters, which were ever green, which never faded, and the music of which was always in her ears. When the first tidings of Euphemia Smith came to Folking she was in all her thoughts and theories of life poles asunder from her mother. There might be suffering and tribulation,—suffering even to death. But her idea of the manner in which the suffering should be endured and death awaited was altogether opposed to that which was hot within her mother's bosom.

But not the less did the mother still pray, still struggle, and still hope. They, neither of them, quite understood each other, but the mother did not at all understand the daughter. She, the mother, knew what the verdict had been, and was taught to believe that by that verdict the very ceremony of her daughter's marriage had been rendered null and void. It was in vain that the truth of the matter came to her from Robert Bolton, diluted through the vague explanations of her husband. "It does not alter the marriage, Robert says." So it was that the old man told his tale, not perfectly understanding, not even quite believing, what his son had told him.

"How can he dare to say so?" demanded the indignant mother of the injured woman. "Not alter the marriage when the jury have

declared that the other woman is his wife! In the eyes of God she is not his wife. That cannot be imputed as sin to her,—not that,—because she did it not knowing. She, poor innocent, was betrayed. But now that she knows it, every mouthful that she eats of his bread is a sin."

"It is the old man's bread," said this older man, weakly.

"What matter? It is the bread of adultery." It may certainly be said that at this time Mrs Bolton herself would have been relieved from none of her sufferings by any new evidence which would have shown that Crinkett and the others had sworn falsely. Though she loved her daughter dearly, though her daughter's misery made her miserable, yet she did not wish to restore the husband to the wife. Any allusion to a possibility that the verdict had been a mistaken verdict was distasteful to her. Her own original opinion respecting Caldigate had been made good by the verdict. The verdict had proved her to be right, and her husband with all his sons to have been wrong. The triumph had been very dark to her; but still it had been a triumph. It was to her an established fact that John Caldigate was not her daughter's husband; and therefore she was anxious, not to rehabilitate her daughter's position, but to receive her own miserable child once more beneath the shelter of her own wing. That they two might pray together, struggle together, together wear their sackcloth and ashes, and together console themselves with their hopes of eternal joys, while they shuddered, not altogether uncomfortably, at the torments prepared for others,—this was now the only outlook in which she could find a gleam of satisfaction; and she was so assured of the reasonableness of her

wishes, so convinced that the house of her parents was now the only house in which Hester could live without running counter to the precepts of her own religion, and counter also to the rules of the wicked outside world, that she could not bring herself to believe but that she would succeed at last. Merely to ask her child to come, to repeat the invitation, and then to take a refusal, was by no means sufficient for her energy. She had failed grievously when she had endeavoured to make her daughter a prisoner at the Grange. After such an attempt as that, it could hardly be thought that ordinary invitations would be efficacious. But when that attempt had been made, it was possible that Hester should justify herself by the law. According to law she had then been Caldigate's wife. There had been some ground for her to stand upon as a wife, and as a wife she had stood upon it very firmly. But now there was not an inch of ground. The man had been convicted as a bigamist, and the other woman, the first woman, had been proved to be his wife. Mrs Bolton had got it into her head that the two had been dissevered as though by some supernal power; and no explanation to the contrary, brought to her by her husband from Robert, had any power of shaking her conviction. It was manifest to all men and to all women, that she who had been seduced, betrayed, and sacrificed should now return with her innocent babe to the protection of her father's roof; and no stone must be left unturned till the unfortunate one had been made to understand her duty.

The old banker in these days had not a good time, nor, indeed, had the Boltons generally. Mrs Bolton, though prone to grasp at power on every side, was apt, like

some other women who are equally grasping, to expect almost omnipotence from the men around her when she was desirous that something should be done by them in accordance with her own bidding. Knowing her husband to be weak from age and sorrow, she could still jeer at him because he was not abnormally strong; and though her intercourse with his sons and their families was now scanty and infrequent, still by a word here and a line there she could make her reproaches felt by them all. Robert, who saw his father every day, heard very much of them. Daniel was often stung, and even Nicholas. And the reproaches reached as far as William, the barrister up in London.

"I am sure I don't know what we can do," said the miserable father, sitting huddled up in his arm-chair one evening towards the end of August. It was very hot, but the windows were closed because he could not bear a draught, and he was somewhat impatiently waiting for the hour of prayers which were antecedent to bed, where he could be silent even if he could not sleep.

"There are five of you. One should be at the house every day to tell her of her duty."

"I couldn't go."

"They could go,—if they cared. If they cared they would go. They are her brothers."

"Mr Caldigate would not let them enter the house," said the old man.

"Do you mean that he would separate her from her brother and her parents?"

"Not if she wished to see them. She is her own mistress, and he will abet her in whatever she may choose to do. That is what Robert says."

"And what Robert says is to be law?"

"He knows what he is talking about." Mr Bolton as he said this shook his head angrily, because he was fatigued.

"And he is to be your guide even when your daughter's soul is in jeopardy?" This was the line of argument in reference to which Mr Bolton always felt himself to be as weak as water before his wife. He did not dare to rebel against her religious supremacy, not simply because he was a weak old man in presence of a strong woman, but from fear of denunciation. He, too, believed her creed, though he was made miserable by her constant adherence to it. He believed, and would fain have let that suffice. She believed, and endeavoured to live up to her belief. And so it came to pass that when she spoke to him of his own soul, of the souls of those who were dear to him, or even of souls in general, he was frightened and paralysed. He had more than once attempted to reply with worldly arguments, but had suffered so much in the encounter that he had learned to abstain. "I cannot believe that she would refuse to see us. I shall go myself; but if we all went we should surely persuade her." In answer to this the poor man only groaned, till the coming in of the old servant to arrange the chairs and put the big Bible on the table relieved him from something of his misery.

"I certainly will not interfere," Robert Bolton said to his father on the next morning. "I will not go to Folking, because I am sure that I should do no good. Hester, no doubt, would be better at your house,—much better. There is nothing I would not do to get her back from the Caldigates altogether,—if there was a chance of success. But we have no power;—none whatever."

"No power at all," said the

banker, shaking his head, and feeling some satisfaction at the possession of an intelligible word which he could quote to his wife.

"She is controller of her own actions as completely as are you and I. We have already seen how inefficacious with her are all attempts at persuasion. And she knows her position. If he were out of prison to-morrow he would be her husband."

"But he has another wife."

"Of that the civil law knows nothing. If money were coming to her he could claim it, and the verdict against him would only be evidence, to be taken for what it was worth. It would have been all very well had she wished to sever herself from him; but as she is determined not to do so, any interference would be useless." The question as to the marriage or no marriage was not made quite clear to the banker's mind, but he did understand that neither he, nor his wife, nor his sons had "any power,"—and of that argument he was determined to make use.

William, the barrister in London, was induced to write a letter, a very lengthy and elaborate epistle having come from Mrs Bolton to his wife, in which the religious duty of all the Boltons was set forth in strong language, and in which he was incited to do something. It was almost the first letter which Mrs William Bolton had ever received from her step-mother, whatever trifling correspondence there might have been between them having been of no consequence. They, too, felt that it would be better that Hester should return to her old home, but felt also that they had no power. "Of course she won't," said Mrs William.

"She has a will of her own," said the barrister.

"Why should she? Think of

the gloom of that home at Chester-ton, and her absolute independence at Folking. No doubt it would be better. The position is so frightful that even the gloom would be better. But she won't. We all know that."

The barrister, however, feeling that it would be better, thought that he should perform his duty by expressing his opinion, and wrote a letter to Hester, which was intended to be if possible persuasive;—and this was the answer:—

"DEAR WILLIAM,—If you were carried away to prison on some horrible false accusation, would Fanny go away from you, and desert your house and your affairs, and return to her parents? You ask her, and ask her whether she would believe anything that anybody could say against you. If they told her that her children were nameless, would she agree to make them so by giving up your name? Wouldn't she cling to you the more, the more all the world was against you?" ['I would,' said Fanny, with tearful energy. 'Fanny' was, of course, Mrs William Bolton, and was the happy mother of five nearly grown-up sons and daughters, and certainly stood in

no peril as to her own or their possession of the name of Bolton. The letter was being read aloud to her by her husband, whose mind was also stirred in his sister's favour by the nature of the arguments used.] "If so," continued the writer, "why shouldn't I be the same? I don't believe a word the people said. I am sure I am his wife. And as, when he was taken away from me, he left a house for his wife and his child to live in, I shall continue to live in it.

"All the same, I know you mean to be good to me. Give my best love to Fanny, and believe me your affectionate sister,

"HESTER CALDIGATE."

In every letter and stroke of the name as she wrote it there was an assertion that she claimed it as her own, and that she was not ashamed of it.

"Upon my word," said Mrs William Bolton, through her tears, "I am beginning to think that she is almost right." There was so much of conjugal proper feeling in this, that the husband could only kiss his wife and leave her without further argument on the matter.

PRESENT AND PAST CONDITIONS OF DOMESTIC SERVICE.

IN spite of all that is said and written about the servants of the present day, we think it probable that service was never better performed, taking it as a whole, than it is now. Never were houses better kept, the order that meets the eye more exact, the domestic arrangements more finished, the dress and demeanour of the servants while performing their functions more neat and appropriate. We do not say this as at all contravening the facts on which a contrary view is set forth, but simply as the state of things that strikes the mere observer. It is a rare thing in cultivated households to come upon palpable disorder. We know that neatness, nicety, finish, do not come of themselves. Do the ladies of the house take more work upon themselves than they used to do in the good old times of the good old servants? and if not, who are to be thanked for these comfortable, cheering, stimulating accessories to social intercourse? Of course we know, from the universal tone of complaint, that there is trouble in the background—that the lady of the house has grievances which strike her as quite unparalleled in former generations: but surely it is something to be able to put a good face upon things; and servants who aid in the pleasant delusion are equal to a task which perhaps their progenitors in service would have found themselves scarcely up to, to judge by the descriptions of loutish men and clumsy maids given in our classical literature.

Servants are, no doubt, now a more shifting generation than they used to be. It is not always that the maid is found inefficient, but that she gives warning; and house-

keeping troubles that take the form of disturbance are naturally more keenly felt where intellectual interests are predominant than in the old good-housewife days. But also in those days the mistress felt change and unsettlement more in her own power than she does now, and this makes them by no means such formidable ideas. When labourers' and artisans' wages were low, and their fare poor, service for their children was promotion, and a good place was a position of envy; for there were more candidates for a good place than there were places. All this is changed now. A servant with a passable character can always get a new situation, in the estimation of her class, as good as the one she leaves. Formerly, therefore, it was the mistress that dismissed the maid; now, it is the maid who suits and fits her place well that gives warning. This is very unpleasant to the mistress. She is prevented from the exercise of her legitimate authority by the consideration that if she speaks she may be thrown into a domestic perplexity. She has to choose her time for reproof, or for even the mildest remonstrance. It is no longer the running comment, to be taken up whenever the occasion presents itself, the still recurring "That's the fault I find with you, Betsy," of a former age—Mrs Poyser's barrel-organ set to the tune of admonition—but an irksome necessity feared and delayed. The criticism has to be wrapped up in smooth, half-apologetic phrase; and if the maid sulks for a day or two, only internally revolving change, and then silently and by slow degrees returns to cheerfulness and seeming content, it is the best that can be

expected. The more frequent result is warning given ; and then follow inquiries at the register office, the sense of failure, the fear of getting a character for bad management, and, worse, to be set down in certain mysterious documents—heard of, but never seen by unprivileged eyes—as undesirable. The truth is, the high modern education of the mistress class adds a morbid element to the difficulty. The two belligerents are less a match, and encounter each other on less equal terms, than of old. Who can imagine Miss Grizzly Oldbuck, for instance, afraid of speaking her full mind to Jenny Rintherout?

Change is the taste of the age. For no other reason than the desire for change, unchecked by any fear of risk in effecting it, does the eligible, handy, efficient parlour-maid give warning. She simply wants to see more of the world. In encountering this craving, no lady can really feel settled in her household. All may seem smooth, and yet she may be greeted any moment by the courteous request for a few moments' conversation, and "I wish, ma'am, to give warning." It is little use inquiring the cause. Some grievance can always be trumped up, but there is scarcely the attempt to prove it a substantial one. Somebody else has higher wages, or the damsel does not like a mixed class of work, or she is now and then called upon to help a fellow-servant, and she prefers having her own duties alone to attend to ; any trifle manifestly sought for at the moment. And if the mistress replies that these are small reasons for giving up a good place, where she has every comfort, and has never heard a harsh word, she serenely acquiesces, for of course they none of them furnish the true motive. The fact is, that the old romantic virtue of loyalty in service has given way

before the pressure of modern ideas. All things else have changed, and such a relic of a bygone age must go with them. The whole relation has altered between master and man, mistress and maid. Servants are more a distinct class, with social ties among themselves, and none other, than ever they have been since the world began. Where the mere comforts and good usage of one place seem certainly a common incident of all service, it does not seem reasonable to adduce them as a moral obligation. Mere liberal usage won't do much so long as there is a sense of *quid pro quo*. Loyalty and fidelity both imply relations with master and sovereign wholly different from that of employer and employed which the respective parties in service have now subsided into, at least partly from the pressure of events. Wherever there has been loyalty there has been companionship or relationship of some sort, and this is not compatible with the structure and habits of modern society. The high polish of the lady makes intercourse on the equal terms meant by companionship uncongenial. The bustle and variety of polished life leave no time for such intercourse. Servants communicate their feelings and thoughts to one another. The kitchen, the servants' hall, are their world in a more exclusive sense than ever before. Servants are now elevated into a class. As a body they can assert themselves with more effect, and secure better terms ; but service as a position never kept its members more rigidly within its own limits ; and the habits of classes cannot easily be run counter to. We may feel all this, but not be able to alter it. Things are changed, and old relations cannot be brought back again by any forced efforts to revive them.

What the intercourse of the

kitchen is, which is thus the sole social arena of so many, is a mystery to the parlour. In contravention of the common idea of unlimited gossip there, it sometimes seems as if an extraordinary reticence prevailed on personal matters in the more thoughtful of the class. They may find a good deal to say, be cheerful and excellent friends, and yet keep their private affairs to themselves with a reserve evincing more prudence than their betters always show under compulsory companionship. In fact, it is more wonderful that so much harmony prevails as does for long spaces of time among persons thus thrown together by chance, than that an occasional outbreak of incompatibility should disturb domestic peace. But good friends as prudence and necessity may keep these young people so long as it suits them to remain together, it is rare that any friendship is established firm enough to overbalance the temptation of fractional higher wages or the love of mere variety. If the love of master and mistress is not a motive, friendship with their equals is not a more powerful one. The ties which bound the two classes of served and servant are, as it seems, permanently relaxed. This is a state of things that adds to the cares of housekeeping, or, we would say, aggravates one of its cares. It disturbs its repose, but it is by no means all change for the worse. And repose must here be used in a qualified sense as affecting the ease of the mistress, not her family surroundings. Once scolding was a good housewife's privilege, if not duty: things were not assumed to go on well without it. How much we hear of scolding and chiding in our older literature! What an amount of pain and irksomeness does not this imply to the mere listener! Who likes to hear scolding but the

scolder? Scolding has gone out possibly under greater refinement of manners; but many a temper holds itself in check, not from any delicacy of sentiment, but because a domestic revolution would be the probable result of its indulgence.

If we regard the qualifications for most forms of service, we find they naturally belong to the earlier years of life. We are speaking now not of households on a large scale, with their graduated steps of service, descending from the stately housekeeper and grey-haired butler who waits upon no one but his master; but of the simpler households of the cultivated middle class.

The great employers of the skilled labour of service are the households which have to be maintained in order and comfort, and some degree of elegance, on limited means, and where, because there are no supernumeraries, service is often most effectual, and most willingly performed. What becomes of the superannuated, we do not know; let us hope they are comfortably settled in life; but the maids we see officiating in their various offices in these modest homes are rarely past the freshness and vigour of life. Health and strength and comeliness of aspect find no better female representative than in the neat-handed and neatly-attired Phillis who waits at table, or—call when we will—ushers us into her mistress's presence. The neat attire may possibly be the livery of service, to be exchanged at every free moment for a costume which betrays the lurking awkwardness of an untrained figure; but simple, easy occupations, carried on in suitable garb, and with a consciousness of skill in them, show all people at their best. Nobody need be awkward who knows what he has to do, and knows he can do it. This must account for the large average of presentable young

women the existing conditions of service, so much mourned over, has to show. Not only looks, but that spirit and hope which carry people contentedly through the present, because there is a different future in prospect, all change with time. The woman of forty-five or fifty may be fully equal to her work, and experience may add to her value and trustworthiness; but she loses something. She becomes wedded to her plans, possibly she sours. She will less than ever endure interference. It has been said, that for the first five years of service the servant serves her mistress; for the next five years she is her own mistress and does as she pleases; for the third five years she rules her mistress and is paramount. Oldservants who are the pride and credit of a house are not always its comfort. Things must go on in a groove. They must be consulted in all changes; they must be considered, let who will be inconvenienced. This is the case where a true fidelity and sincere regard for their master's interest are an equivalent. But often where selfish and crafty views were only forming in youth, long habit and impunity mature them into active principles. What painful histories we read of the tyrannies of old servants! Most experiences have their own examples. Finally, there is a consideration we mention with some hesitation, for it concerns an obligation which no one should feel burdensome on whom it rightly falls; but it is simply a fact that where change is become so much a rule, the duty of supporting the superannuated servant falls through for want of an object. Many a small income has been further limited by such claims. On such occasions the thought may occur that persons so loud in their complaint of the independence of the modern servant, escape the chance

of this tax on a narrowed income in declining years.

This train of thought has been followed rather against the grain; for who does not fancy old times rather than new? and what employer of labour of any sort likes the jaunty air of independence which belongs to all its branches now? But there is a tone common in our day which must set thought going; the domestic grievance, as a modern grievance, suggests so much counter inquiry and reflection on what were the practices of the days which stand now for the good times,—the days when the relation was so much more to the advantage of the master than it is now. We shall find, in the first place, that good results at no time were ever brought about without trouble and sacrifice. A letter which recently appeared in the 'Times' throws some light on this point. The lady who writes it was stimulated by another correspondent's picture of the slavery of waiting-maids at lodging-houses—a letter which we had also read and speculated upon. Servants at lodging-houses are no doubt the drudges of the profession. There are always women who would rather do hard work in a rough way, than easier work for the body that demands the brain-work of attention and precision. In a certain slatternly way they will get through Herculean labours; and the temporary occupants of lodgings are always in their hardest-hearted state, throwing all the cruelties of overtaking strength on the conscience of the mistress and organiser of the establishment. But, also, many women really prefer, on the whole, such drudging service to that of what are called regular families, where one day is like another all the year round. Over-driven and almost sinking under their burden, they have al-

ways the expectation of fees, and keep up their spirits by a running calculation of chances of what the collective gifts of half-a-dozen separate occupants will have amounted to when the season is over and the time of rest and holiday comes: the gay, perhaps rollicking, time, looking forward to which sweetens toil to so many. However this may be, the writer in question is incited by the catalogue of wrongs to state her own case, which she seems to consider a damaging counter-charge against London servants as a body. But on looking into it we see that her quarrel is more justly with human nature, as it always has been and always will be, than with any temporary state of affairs; for her domestic arrangements, which she very *naïvely* places before the reader, are such as to secure almost certain failure. She is a young housekeeper with an evident preference for youth and good-looks in her attendants. She can only afford to keep two servants; and the plan of the house, the rule of master and mistress is never to be at home on Sunday themselves; the respectable cook having her Sunday out alternately with the pretty housemaid, who is left in sole charge with the liberty of inviting her relations. Need we wonder that the damsel, whether pretty or ugly, whom she hires as a perfect stranger, with simply the ordinary vouchers for character, should abuse such unwonted, unprecedented liberty? that "No. 4" of her series should never agree with the cook as to the amount of provisions to be supplied to her numerous relations, her Sunday guests? or even that "No. 5," engaged as a thorough servant at high wages, should be discovered turning her house into a sort of bar-parlour? Does the writer think that the "constant

service of the antique world" was produced under such a system as this? In fact, a young girl may have all the qualities that make a good servant under prudent guidance, who would be thrown out of all moral gear by a temptation like this to liberty and patronage. The very condition of servitude, as opposed to rule and headship, implies supervision in its early stages; and every good servant is proud to look back on this sort of apprenticeship to strict system and order. We are quite aware that these are truisms, but the correspondents of newspapers do not seem to know them.

The modern literature of our subject is to be found in the columns of newspapers—where probably the power of writing a telling experience is in an inverse ratio to the worth of it as a practical guide—and in some novels; and we think it is mainly confined to these mediums. Looking back, we see a difference. Our old literature, grave or gay, didactic or satirical, has a great deal about servants. They must, indeed, always be talked of as a class by themselves; but in fact they were much more mixed with, as sharing intercourse with, their social betters, as humble companions. They had more chances of rising; service was less of a social separation. Of course the servant was subject to his master in a sense that would be intolerable to his successor. He had to submit to his humours, to be subservient, to endure harsh language, and even blows, and to be thankful for fare and lodging which men and maids now would reject with scorn: but,—he had more personal intercourse—he could speak his mind, give his opinion, and be familiar upon occasion; and wherever there is such intercourse, inseparable from it is a certain sense of equality. The servant, if he is the wiser man of the

two, has the chance of not only feeling it, but making it apparent. And this the present rigid separation of classes bars. When Nicole in the play laughs at her master's "pleasant figure" in his new clothes as *personne de qualité*, and he threatens to give her the best slap in the face she ever had in her life, her answer lets us into the relation we indicate: "Tenez, monsieur, battez-moi plutôt, et me laissez rire tout mon saoul, cela me ferai plus de bien, hi, hi, hi, hi, hi!" Here Molière represents, in caricature certainly, but yet a real state of things, which comedy could not parody now, because society presents nothing analogous to it. But indeed, as we call to mind, it need have been no caricature, but only what happened every day; for Pepys records in his Diary having given his maid a cuff which made her cry for some piece of clumsiness, and being vexed at himself, not for doing it, but because he was seen doing it by his neighbour's footboy, who would be sure to report it to his own mistress. Nor was he behind M. Jourdain in an appeal to the taste of the humbler members of his household, though probably relying on a more politic verdict. After huge deliberation he had submitted his head to the barber, had his abundant *haire* cut off to be made another wig of, and donned the periwig the man had brought with him ("I paid him £3 for it"). "By-and-by I went abroad, after I had caused all my maids to look upon it; and they conclude it do become me, though Jane was mightily troubled for my parting with my own *haire*, and so was Besse." Such private ordeals have their use, enabling Mr Pepys, in this instance, to face the scrutiny of the Court with a bolder countenance—"I am glad it is over," he writes; and the equal, if not superior terrors of

church, "where I found my coming in a periwig did not prove so strange as I was afraid it would, for I thought that all the church would presently have cast eyes upon me; but I found no such thing." Probably the maids were better judges then than we should find them now: their eyes were practised on a wider field; they were equally at home in kitchen and parlour, dressing the mistress or following her into company. All the plays of the Restoration take this for granted. What would Mellamant, —too fine a lady to carry a memory of her own— have been without her Mrs Minceing at hand to tell her what she had been doing and thinking the day before? Swift, in his "Grand Question Debated," represents the waiting-maid as present at the controversy between Sir Arthur and his lady:—

"But Hannah, who listened to all that was past,
And could not endure so vulgar a taste,
As soon as her ladyship called to be drest,
Cry'd, 'Madam, why, surely my master's possesst!'"

And elsewhere, while amusing himself at the airs which this position of prominence inspired in the waiting-maid, he testifies to the same state of things. "I hear," he quotes one saying, "it's all over London already that I'm going to leave my lady." Indications of this companionship are still found in the memoirs of last century: for example, George Selwyn's friend, Lady Townsend, took what he chose to consider too sentimental an interest in the unfortunate Lord Kilmarnock, just condemned, and he treated her anxiety so coolly that she "flung up-stairs," leaving him at table. Upon which he took Mrs Dorcas, her woman, and made her sit down and finish the bottle with him, who, taking ad-

vantage of the occasion, pursued the subject in a tone and spirit he could much better sympathise with. "And pray, sir, do you think my lady will be prevailed on to let me see the execution? I have a friend that has promised to take care of me, and I can lie in the Tower the night before." Comedy, which could not dispense with the waiting-maid, in its transition to modern manners had to present her in dialogue with her mistress, in casual encounters, or soliloquising on the marketable value of simplicity. So long as this more familiar footing was the rule—so long, perhaps, as noblemen offered personal attendance on their sovereign, and gentlemen were trained by service in the houses of the great—we find constant examples of social rise from this condition. Thus Ben Jonson's servant, Brome, became a writer of comedies himself, and the author of no mean lines—in commendation of which his master wrote:—

"I had you for a servant once, Dick Brome,
And you performed a servant's faithful parts;
Now you are got into a nearer room
Of fellowship, professing my old arts."

Later on, Wood, in his 'Athenæ,' has examples. Thus he tells of one Vavasor Powell, a noted preacher, who boasted himself a member of Jesus College, Oxford. "He was brought up a scholar, saith the publisher of his life; but the writer of 'Strena Vavasoriensis' tells us that his employment was to walk guests' horses, by which, finding no great gain, he was elevated in his thoughts for higher preferment, and so became an ostler (I would say groom) to Mr Isaac Thomas, an innkeeper and mercer in Shropshire." From thence he found his way to Oxford, and got learning enough to make a stir in

the world. The gossip of the last century all tells the same way. Thus a footman of the Duke of Marlborough, of the name of Craggs, was advanced by his master's favour till eventually his son became Secretary Craggs, a power in the State. Arthur Moore, the father of James Moore Smyth, whose name lives in Pope's verse, "had worn a livery too;" and whether truly or by an ingenious supposition, when Craggs (the Secretary) got into a coach with him, he exclaimed, "Why, Arthur, I am always getting up behind—are not you?" Horace Walpole's comment upon a certain wedding is, "The great-granddaughter of a king marries the grandson of a footman." When a man got out of temper with his heirs, instead of leaving his money to a charity, he thought of his body-servant, with whom, no doubt, he was on terms of familiarity. One General Fitzwilliam of that day made a will that was indeed pronounced "a disgrace to misanthropy," whatever that may mean; but it proves that his own man, "whom he originally took a shoeless boy in Wales playing on the harp," was more to him than the crookedest temper finds a valet now; the servant showing himself deserving of this regard under circumstances upsetting to a weaker head.

"Some large and useless legacies," writes Richard Cambridge to Miss Berry, "to people who neither want nor will be thankful, and to Lord Fitzwilliam £500 a-year; the servant, Harper Tom Jones, residuary legatee, above £40,000. He came to Lord Fitzwilliam, said he was overpowered—wished he had only had a suitable provision—did not know what to do with his fortune; had no friend—begged his lordship's protection; offered all the books and pictures, and anything else his lordship would accept. Lord F. said to me, if the General had known he would have behaved so, he would not have left it him."

We doubt if any biographical picture of the worthies of this past date is held complete that does not inform us of the relation of the man and his servants. They were part of his family—stationary members. There will always be a class of men who like to spend their own money, and to whom spending in its details is interesting; and this disposition will of course draw master and servant into intercourse. Pepys, for example, would have found it so at any time; he would never have been disposed to give his wife—"poor wretch"—the charge of his purse; but also, it seems according to the custom of the time that he should engage the cook. "This morning came a new cook-maid at £4 per annum, the first time I ever did give so much. She did last live at my lord Monk's house." But where the wife was probably housewife in the full sense, we find all the good men of that date had a sense of responsibility towards their domestics which would arise from more intercourse—more interchange of words and ideas—than is the custom now, when, in many a household, the master passes his life with scarcely a word with his servants beyond the most necessary orders; satisfied in leaving all to his wife, both the planning and carrying out of rules, as her function. The saints of our English biography are generally shown as taking the office of ruler upon themselves. The good man keeps his household in strict order, expects a faithful attendance, directs their religious duties, exercises his humility upon them, gathers them round his deathbed, gives parting admonitions, and thanks for their faithful service. In all it is assumed that the service is long and faithful. Thus Doctor Hammond "sought to ensnare the servants

to their benefit," while catechising the children of the family where he had found shelter in evil times, "giving liberty—nay, invitation—to as many as would come and hear, hoping they happily might admit the truths obliquely levelled, which bashfulness persuaded not to inquire for." Besides, "he invited single persons to religious conference with him at their leisurable hours, using all the arts of encouragement and obliging condescension; and having once got the scullion in his chamber upon that errand, he would not give him the uneasiness of standing, but made him sit down by his side." Sir Matthew Hale in his family was a very gentle master. He was tender to all his servants; he never turned any away except they were faulty and there was no hope of reclaiming them. When he did reprove them, he did it with that sweetness and gravity, that it appeared he was concerned for their having done a fault, more than for the offence given by it to himself. If on one occasion he gave way to a temper naturally passionate, it was for no personal disrespect. He was scarce ever seen more angry than with one of his servants for neglecting a bird that he kept, so that it died for want of food. Bishop Bull, the vivacity of whose natural temper exposed him to sharp and sudden fits of anger, which gave him no less uneasiness than they did those persons concerned in the nearest offices about him (but the trouble was soon over), made sufficient amends to all his domestics by the goodness and tenderness of his nature towards them at all times and on all occasions. He was very particular to have Sunday readings for his servants. He would not keep servants who did not receive the Holy Communion; he called them around

him when dying to express his gratitude for attendance.

To pass on to the following century, when the crowd of lazy servants had become one of the reproaches of the day. Still, in steady families, their welfare was considered in a sense often missing among ourselves. Mrs Elizabeth Carter, we are told, never lost the consciousness of their presence while waiting at table, where they are too often forgotten in modern society. She was so popular a converser, that, living in London in a house of her own, she never dined at home, some one or other of her numerous friends sending their carriage or chair for her every day; and her biographer, in somewhat formal terms, enlarges on the constant attention to the important interests of piety and virtue which characterised her conversation.

"Especially while servants were in attendance at meals, she made a point, as far as it could be done without breaking through the customs of society, to give the conversation such a turn as might be useful to them. So that indirectly and incidentally, as it were, she often contrived to impress upon their minds truths of the greatest consequence, which, perhaps, made sometimes a deeper impression than if delivered from the pulpit by the most eloquent preacher; and, in fact, they always listened to instruction so conveyed with the utmost earnestness, and in all families where she was accustomed to visit intimately, showed her the most marked and zealous attention. Indeed, her manners were so gentle, and her tone of voice so sweet, that it was almost impossible to be uncivil to her; and I have heard a lady of rank, who was one of her dearest friends, and with whom she lived a great deal, declare that she attributed much of the general good conduct of her servants—of whom there was a large establishment—to their listening so frequently to such conversation,—in which, indeed, it ought to be added that nobody was better qualified or more willing to join than herself and her lord."

Dr Johnson comes out very pleasantly, as every one knows, in this relation. Rather than hurt Francis Barber, his black servant's feelings, he himself brought his cat her dinner; and what is more, while "this faithful negro" was at school at Easton, probably of his placing there, he wrote letters to him. In travelling in Scotland, and visiting Lord Monboddo, Boswell finds, among other coincidences of resemblance between Johnson and his host, that they had each a black servant. This man, "Gory," was sent to conduct them from the house to the highroad. At parting, Johnson addressed him: "Mr Gory, give me leave to ask you a question. Are you baptised?" Gory told him he was, and confirmed by the Bishop of Durham. He then, it is added, gave him a shilling. Towards the class he seems always to have showed respect; and Boswell records with pride his commendation of his Bohemian servant, Joseph Ritter. "Let not my readers disdain his introduction, for Dr Johnson gave him this character: 'Sir, he is a civil man and a wise man.'"

Nor was the country without its lettered members of the order. The 'Monthly Review,' of a few years' earlier date than this, patronises with its warmest encouragement a work on the abstrusest doctrinal questions by George Williams, a livery servant—*bonâ fide*, as the reviewers took the trouble to ascertain. This George is a prig of the first water, and dismisses the conclusions of ancient Fathers and modern divines with an easy assurance. "Believe me," says he, "they have not one text of Scripture;" and so on. "Well said, honest George!" cries the heterodox reviewer. "If his manner borders sometimes on coarseness," it is added, "the liberal and candid reader will consider his education." Encouraged by such applause, honest George proceeds to take the Articles

in hand by the same easy method ; but whether for going farther still, or for retracting what he had already said, he receives a sort of snub from his admirer.

From the pen of Berkeley, not yet Bishop, we have the character of a servant written in his easy style. The good servant, we may observe, generally carries his date with him. The bad one contrives to be always modern, always to fit in as a portrait of one we know :—

“*Dec. 1, 1726.*—You also desire I would speak of Ned. You must know Ned hath parted from me ever since the beginning of last July. I allowed him six shillings a-week, besides his annual wages. Besides an entire livery, I gave him old clothes, which he made a penny of. But the creature grew idle and worthless to a prodigious degree. He was almost constantly out of the way ; and when I told him of it he used to give me warning. I bore with this behaviour about nine months, to let him know I did it in compassion to him, and in hopes he would mend ; but finding no hopes of this, I was forced at last to discharge him and take another, who is as diligent as he was negligent. When he parted from me I paid him between six and seven pounds which was due to him, and likewise gave him money to bear his charges to Ireland, whither he said he was going. I met him to-day in the street, and asking him why he was not gone to Ireland to his wife and child, he made answer that he had neither wife nor child. He got, it seems, into another service when he left me, but continued only a fortnight in it. The fellow is silly to an incredible degree, and spoiled by good usage.”

Berkeley was clearly an easy master, and such a fellow in London would find an abundance of kindred spirits. Being invited, as the ‘*Spectator*’ puts it, to write a satire on grooms, Addison enters on the relation of master and servant, and all the abuses of the period. The swarm of servants kept for mere ostentation could not but produce the

worst results. The men followed their masters to places of entertainment, where they had nothing to do but to gossip. The custom of the time, in giving them board-wages, led them to congregate in clubs and taverns, where all the scandal of the day was discussed and propagated among them. What is noteworthy in the complaints put into the mouths, or rather pens, of the men against their masters is, that however ill they are used, they cling to their places. Not that this is the general assumption. On the contrary, foreigners are represented as astonished at the condition of things in England, considering there is no other part of the world where servants have such privileges and advantages—nowhere else where they have such wages or indulgent liberty—no place where they labour less ; and yet where they are so little respectful, more wasteful, more negligent, or where they so frequently change their masters. This may only have meant that in other countries the condition of the classes which furnish servants was much more miserable than in England, and a return to their privations a thing not to be thought of by the French valet under any tyranny. The ‘*Spectator*’ gives amusing examples of the modes by which an ill-tempered sardonic master could make himself unpleasant ; but at the end we find the reporter of it all has served him upwards of nine years, and only begins to despair of ever pleasing him. Some of our readers will recollect the “pleasanter tyrant than any of the above” who was observed on the Five Fields towards Chelsea. “A fat fellow was passing on in his waistcoat ; a boy of fourteen in a livery carrying after him his cloak, upper coat, hat, wig, and sword. The poor lad was ready to sink under the weight, and could not keep up with his master, who turned back every

half furlong, and wondered what made the lazy young dog lag behind." Of the number of servants supposed necessary for a gentleman of position, we may form an idea from Lord Chesterfield's directions to his son, then a lad with his tutor at Paris, who was coming over to England on a short visit. "Bring with you only your *valet de chambre*, Christian, and your own footman—not your *valet de place*, whom you may dismiss for the time—as also your coachman." It is not wholly out of place to add the instructions regarding his wardrobe, as showing that the fine gentleman of the period needed a good deal of waiting upon, as well as protection from the weather. "Bring only the clothes you travel in, one suit of your fine clothes, two or three of your laced shirts, and the rest plain ones; of other things, as bags and feathers, as you think proper." The Court being in mourning is given as a reason for the moderation of this list. We see that a gentleman could not look after his own feathers, and also what a work of art he was, and how many artists he needed about him.

Garrick's "High Life below Stairs" was a satire on the fashion of crowding the house with useless menials, as it was the custom to call them. "You are a young man, Mr Lovel," says the moral Mr Freeman, "and take a pride in a number of idle, unnecessary servants, who are the plague and reproach of this kingdom." And there follow in illustration some capital scenes, which never lose their fun, though, as a satire, it may be hoped they have lost some of their edge. A notice of the farce at the time pronounces "that it has a considerable share of merit, and has met with most amazing success in London;" but goes on to state that "in Edinburgh, however, it found prodigious opposition from the

gentlemen of the party-coloured regiment, who raised repeated riots in the playhouse whenever it was acted, and even went so far as to threaten the lives of some of the performers." Nothing certainly could more emphatically illustrate the pitch to which the evil had arrived than this mode of meeting the charge. "This insolence," we are further told, "in some degree brought about the very reformation it meant to oppose, being the occasion of an association immediately entered into by almost all the nobility and gentry in Scotland, and publicly subscribed to in the periodical papers, whereby they bound themselves mutually to each other to put a stop to the absurd and scandalous custom of giving vails, prevalent nowhere but in these kingdoms." We almost see here Mr Sneer's ideal carried out, and the stage made a court of ease to the Old Bailey.

About the date of this farce, an absurd and yet most pitiable tragedy was enacted, in which the wearers of livery must have been principal performers, and one, we are told, a leading sufferer. Horace Walpole, writing of the execution of Earl Ferrers, says Lord Ferrers went to the gallows in his landau-and-six, dressed in his wedding-clothes, his coachman crying all the way; a hearse following. The procession lasted two hours, with a mixture of pageantry, shame, and ignominy. A protracted torment to man—*men*, no doubt as well as master—surely unique in its circumstance.

In all these instances gathered from a past date, "servants" mean men-servants. The word was so understood in the literature of the period. The crowd of useless attendants wore liveries. An adjunct had to be applied where the contrary was intended—cook-maid, scullery-maid, and the like. In its familiar use, and as a newspaper topic, we may say the word

nowadays has changed its sex. Perhaps because the middle classes are having their say. But in country places, among quiet people, women now wait and are visible where men alone used to be seen. Wages have risen enormously, which is one reason,—and some people would say the class has become more unmanageable; but also the world has outlived certain forms of finery—that is, has exchanged them for others. The genteel period is passed. No obituary of an old lady would report it now, as we have seen it in records of the last century, as an eccentricity on a par with keeping eighty cats and a black woman to attend upon them, “that, though affluent, she never would have a man-servant.” No doubt the class of female domestics has advanced in refinement with the world at large. It is the fashion to assume that cleanliness in its thorough-going, all-pervading acceptance, was the quality for which households of the old stamp were distinguished. Where the mistress and her daughters held strict supervision that would be so; but we have now and then an insight into things as they were, where this eye was wanting, which tells another tale. A certain Will Verral’s experiences are so much to the point that we will give them, as chancing upon them in our own reading, though we have seen them quoted not very long since elsewhere. Will was an innkeeper and man-cook, of Lewes, in Sussex, employed by the gentlemen of his neighbourhood to cook their State dinners for them. He published a cookery-book—the date 1759—and wrote a preface to it which shows him master of a picturesque style :

“I have been sent for many and many a time to get dinners for some of the families hereabouts. The salute generally is, ‘Will’ (for that is my

name), ‘I want you to dress me a dinner to-day.’ ‘With all my heart, sir,’ says I; ‘how many will your company be?’ ‘Why, about ten or twelve or thereabouts.’ ‘And what would you please to have me get, sir, for ye?’ ‘Oh,’ says the gentleman, ‘I shall leave that entirely to you,’ &c. My next step was to go and offer a great many compliments to Mrs Cook about getting the dinner. The girl, I’ll say that for her, returned the compliment very prettily by saying, ‘Sir, whatever my master or you shall order me to do, shall be done as far and as well as I am able.’ But Nanny (for that I found to be her name) soon got into such an air as often happens upon such occasions. ‘Pray, Nanny,’ says I, ‘where do you place your stew-pans and other things you make use of in the cooking way?’ ‘La, sir,’ says she, ‘that is all we have’ (pointing to one poor solitary stew-pan, as one might call it, but no more fit for the use than a wooden hand-dish). ‘Umph!’ says I to myself, ‘how’s this to be? A surgeon may as well attempt to make an incision with a pair of shears, or open a vein with an oyster-knife, as for me to pretend to get this dinner without proper tools to do it.’ At length, wanting a sieve, I begged of Nanny to give me one; and so she did, in a moment—but such a one! I put my fingers to it, and found it gravely. ‘Nanny,’ says I, ‘this won’t do; it is sandy.’ She looked at it, and angry enough she was. ‘Rot our Sue,’ says she, ‘she’s always taking my sieve to sand her nasty, dirty stairs!’ But, however, to be a little cleanly, Nanny gave it a thump upon the table, much about the part of it where the meat is generally laid, and whips it into the boiler, where, I suppose, the pork and cabbage were boiling for the family, gives it a sort of a rinse, and gave it to me again with as much of the pork-fat about it as would poison the whole dinner: so I said no more, but could not use it, and made use of a napkin that I slyly made friends with her fellow-servants for, at which she leered round and set off; but I heard her say, as she flirted her tail into the scullery, ‘Hang these men-cooks, they are so confounded nice! I’ll be whipt,’ says she, ‘if there was more sand in the sieve than would lay upon a sixpence!’”

Nanny, evidently under no female supervision or control, is no case in point; but as a general remark, we may observe that the condition of service never takes a stand that more develops feminine powers and resource than where, as domestic, and strictly in that capacity, she presides over her master's establishment. The relation gives perhaps more room than any other of dependant and superior for a satisfactory division of the respective merits of either sex. Each gives way to the other with a willing deference. The woman ungrudgingly allows to the man all intellectual pre-eminence of the speculative kind; the more readily because this implies powers exciting no curiosity. Rousseau made a mistake when he proposed that man should only be waited on by his wife. However devoted the wife, however she may say,

"I cannot understand, I love,"—

she has yearnings, provoking questions, and the trouble of answering them, which may be a bore. The ideal housekeeper, the presiding genius of the kitchen, while conventionally looking up to, really looks down upon her master from an unapproachable eminence. On the, to her, sole important questions, she feels she can do without his gifts; in fact, she could not do with them, while he is wholly dependent on hers. He thinks, he writes, he talks, he amuses himself in doors and out; she keeps the house going, looks after his comfort and his dinners, and protects him from imposition, to which his confiding and open hand renders him liable. To have the charge of a superior being is very like in feeling to being his superior. On his side nobody minds being under the gentle control of servants devoted to him. It is felt a sort of distinction as implying easiness of temper.

The adoring patronage of the servants' hall leaves a man free to indulge his humour with unrestraint. This relation implies indeed, on the man's part, what we will call the gift of being waited upon, which a good many people, indeed the majority, are without—the habit of receiving watchful attention, not as a claim, not to be exacted as a due, but, like the air you breathe, part of a state of things. There are cases where this watchful, intelligent respect soothes like an anodyne. Persons unfortunate in the distant survey of their positions are seen by those who look close to have a compensation in a surrounding atmosphere of unobtrusive loving tendance.

This relation—divested, however, of the chivalrous respect of these ideal instances—is seen in the households of the humbler class of priests in foreign countries, according to the accounts we read of them; in cases in which no breath of scandal throws suspicion. The readers of Manzoni will remember among his most telling scenes those of the lively wrangles between Don Abfondio, testy and querulous, and his faithful, truth-speaking Perpetua. Just the same relation exists—exists, indeed, necessarily—between the *Prevosto* and his one servant now, as we are shown in Mrs Comyn Carr's lively volumes, 'North Italian Folks.' She gives a scene. The old man has invited a poor parishioner to share the scanty dinner with him and his housekeeper. He has laid aside his clerical garments, and lounges at ease in an old coat, his tonsured head covered by a battered straw-hat.

"Presently Caterina bustles in: 'Listen to me, Prevosto,' breaks forth the faithful woman, and she is not careful to moderate her voice even to the semblance of secrecy; 'you don't bring another mouth for me to feed

here when it is baking-day again. Per Bacco! no indeed, the mean, grasping creature! She has as much food in her own house as we have any day. . . . But it shan't happen again, do you hear? For shame of you! Come now to your dinner in the kitchen; I'm not going to bring it in here. You'd best look sharp, for I know there's a dying woman up at San Fedele you ought to go after. I don't know what you took off your canonicals for!' And Caterina, the better for this free expression, hastens to dress up the *ministra*.

"Poor old priest! what a shrew he has got in his house! says some pitying reader. Yet he would not part with her for worlds. She is his solace, his right hand, and loves him besides none the less for her sharp, uncurbed speech.

"Words in Caterina's mouth are only the natural vent of her quick, eager nature, when the words are spoken to the old priest. For the most part they are forgotten as soon as uttered, both by master and servant. The lonely man cannot afford to quarrel with mere froth of words in the woman who devotes her life to his comfort. Who would care for him as cares this poor hard-working servant? Who else could lay aside her ease, and forget her people, that she might carry his interests the steadier at heart, the better to fight his battles, and guard his homestead, and order his goods to advantage?

"Yet Caterina is no miracle of a servant. In many a lonely and cheerless home of Italian priest can I call to mind such a woman as this—such a fond and faithful drudge, with harsh ways and soft heart! And where the priest is old, having plodded out his life in some little secluded parish, among a people more uneducated than himself, there the servant is old also, and the one has almost drifted into a shape and mould of the other's nature and mind. For, as home companionship goes, are they not all in all to each other? There is no wife for a comrade, there are no children to keep the old life burning to the end in these homes of the Roman priesthood, and yet who shall pretend that they are always sad?"

Here at least is that freedom of

speech which we have required as indispensable to attachment; to instilling fidelity and loyalty, as distinct from honesty and fair dealing, in which we believe modern service does not fall short of any previous age. Modern experience, where mistress and maid are thrown together by the exigencies of a common interest—as in sickness, or by the bond of loving devotion to the same child, almost equally strong in mother and nurse—can recall cares where self and private hope and prospects voluntarily give way to a romantic sense of duty and the claims of service,—at the expense of real sacrifice. There is nothing that gathers romance about it more quickly than such service as this. Every memory has some example, "long ago," to itself, but yet recent enough to keep up the tradition as a current thing. Every correspondence has its scenes and pictures. Thus the nurse of a large family, after years of most faithful service, marries and settles comfortably. The family she served are travelling in her direction, and give her notice of a call. A letter describes the scene. "Poor Betsy was standing at her door looking exceedingly nice, and better looking than ever I recollect her, but so excited, and, as she said, overjoyed, she could hardly speak. She could only seize mamma's hand and kiss it, till we all got out of the carriage and surrounded her. She told us afterwards that from the time she had F.'s letter to say we were coming, she had no rest night or day." One word in perusing this narrative suggests change: the prosperous wife with her children about her, uses throughout the words "Master" and "Mistress"—words obsolete now. "Her husband is the best in the world except 'Master,' as she always calls papa." "I always says that *Master* was

the best husband and father in the world." Of course the abandonment of this title has a meaning lying at the root of change.

The true school for service of the thorough sort is probably where there is work to do: real work, and plenty of it, but at the same time consideration. No caprice, no ill-temper, and as little interference as possible in the manner and method of doing, so long as the work is done as it ought to be.

The faithful servant, we trust, will never be reduced to a recollection, but there is one specimen of the class which we really believe to be out of date. Observation and present report give us no example of it: and that is what we will call the Puritan—the frigidly strict and precise in dress, diction, and manners. The type lives in Lyddy, the sole domestic of Mr Lyon, the minister in 'Felix Holt:' Lyddy, who announces visitors in a tone of despondency, finishing with a groan; and who would not object to drinking warm ale as a remedy against the face-ache—one of her numerous maladies—if it would hinder poor dear Miss Esther from speaking "light," who had objected to her broth on the ground that she cried into it. Some forty or fifty years ago Methodism still enjoyed a Quakerish gravity of attire upon its votaries; and we find in a letter on domestic affairs a description of one in service. "Nothing," writes the lady, "can set me free from my embarrassments but the marriage of my housemaid. I cannot find anything in the even tenor of her way that will give me a reasonable pretext for discharging her, and yet her leaden movements seem to hang like a dead weight upon us all. Then she provokes me past my patience by determining never to be well. Mr J. says there is nothing on earth the matter with her. All this time she would consider her-

self the greatest sinner in the place if she wore a bunch of ribbons in her bonnet, or put a curl-paper in her hair; and I suppose she would be turned out of the society if she exhibited such symptoms of a worldly spirit."

The cold chill diffused by the presence of such a living walking gloom of disapproval as is here described, must be unpleasant enough; but the inconvenience is of the passive endurable order as compared to the opposite temper and ways of its modern extreme contrary. We must go to America for the picture of the servant as the direct produce of modern ideas. "A Groan from New York" is disposed to think Britain avenged for the rebellion of last century by the new rebellion of this. "That a new and horrible tyranny has grown up in American society cannot be denied. Every year our domestics demand more money, do less work, insist on greater privileges, destroy, without atonement, a greater number of household goods, solace themselves with more receptions and symposia at our unwilling expense, indulge in a greater number of amatory adventures under our very noses, copy more literally the costumes, and, so far as they can, the manners and habits, of our wives and daughters; and, to conclude, set our taste, purse, and comfort more supremely at nought. The same grievance is complained of bitterly in England of late; but we believe that in no country in the world are household servants—perhaps it is just to say female household servants—so given over to waste, sloth, exaction, and finery, as in the United States of to-day."

Something of this state of things might certainly have been foreseen when the Americans as a body threw over the authority above them. We are not treating of their right to do so, but only the natural

consequences of the act. It stands to reason that servants cannot hold the same relation to master and mistress that they used to do, when master and mistress in their turn acknowledged social superiors, and the term "betters" was an accepted one in all ranks but the highest of all. It is a flat impossibility for American society to have servants in the Old World sense so long as this word is odious to the nation. It would, no doubt, be very pleasant for the high sense of independence to stop short with the individual who rejoices in it, seeing that the qualities that make this lofty independence amiable and serviceable require a mental training, rarely attained by the uncultured.

Nothing but a course of service from early years, an apprenticeship under the superiors of the class, can teach the fundamental lesson that lies at the bottom of the theory of service, that the servant's time is his master's; that his work is not a certain set of duties to be performed, and then freedom to act as he chooses and go where he chooses, like a journeyman doing a job, and then taking himself off; but that he is a member of his master's family, bound by its rules, and subject to its laws. It is a frequent experiment—often forced upon people by necessity—to take into service a young woman whose life has been passed in factories, or some employment where, work done, she is her own mistress. We do not say it never answers, but we know no instance in which there was not this difference between the trained servant and the amateur, that the *quondam* "hand" thinks herself her own mistress when her work is done. She has not the instinct of service—the family tie to her mistress, the relationship which

puts her concerns first and foremost. This is the much-desired relation which it is the tendency of social changes to weaken, if not to destroy. So hopeless as an object, and so little desirable to some modern theorists indeed is it, that a new scheme, as everybody knows, is set on foot for carrying on the domestic work of life. As we write, our eye happens to fall on an advertisement, proposing itself an attempt to test the working power of "Mr Ruskin's ethical teaching." "TO WOMEN.—LADY HELP required for Nursery; another for Kitchen. Country life of much simplicity and self-help. Entire social equality. Adequate Salary. No servants kept, but work fairly shared by all.—'Oxon,' *Spectator* Office, &c."

We can only say that this is an experiment of which we should like to watch the progress at a safe distance; but failing this opportunity, we will hazard the opinion that the most exasperated of American grumblers at the state of things as it now is with him, would thankfully return to his existing grievances after a three months' trial of this mode of escaping them. He would be keeping them at arm's-length by relegating them again to the kitchen in comparison with this ever-present conflict with the embarrassing and uncongenial. Changes in the social relation of classes should be gradual. The way to make the best of things is to see the good in them, and act upon that—not to take a flying leap out of them, as in this scheme; which we believe arises out of an exaggerated view of existing evils, as though society were the victim of some abnormal experience, instead of its suffering from one of the many forms of disorder to which a difficult and complicated relation must ever be subject.

A MEDIUM OF LAST CENTURY.—CONCLUSION.

THOSE West India balls of the olden time have been described by so many powerful pens that I must again take the liberty of abbreviating Mr Clifton's somewhat lengthy description, which, when it was written, being new, would no doubt have been infinitely amusing. Quiet as he was, he seems to have had a keen sense of humour; and as he wrote before there was a Michael Scott or a Marryat, he did well to indulge his talent. He tells of the wonderful dresses of the company, which to his eye, fresh from Europe, presented an appearance exquisitely quizzical. He was more impressed by the degree and quantity of beauty in the ladies than by their dresses; but the men he evidently considered to be what we should now call "guys." The busha from Higson's Gap, perspiring in a laced velvet coat, is celebrated by him, as also the wearers of various costumes, some including thick wigs. But especially he notes the hilarity of the whole company, where nobody was *blasé* or cynical, and all the world seemed determined to have a night of thorough enjoyment if possible. He was astonished to observe how all these people, so languid and inanimate in the daytime, became now at night filled with the very spirit of action: how they tore and scampered about the room, the ladies more alive if possible than their partners, their eyes sparkling, their cheeks glowing, their feet twinkling; while the barbarous music screamed, and scratched, and brayed, and clanged, but entirely answered the purpose for which it was provided. Spite of his quiet habits he found himself more than once in the stream which, like that brook which

brags that it goes on for ever, flowed incessantly towards the "tap," where a dozen coloured people dispensed powerful refreshments through a window opening on a veranda, and freely exchanged compliments and observations with their customers. He understood, for he sympathised with, the thirst of his own sex; but it made him open his eyes to see dainty, delicate girls come up to the bar and toss off tumblers of beer, while the attendants remarked to them,— "My, missy, you really lubly dis evening! me long for come hax you to dance;" or, "Hei, my sweet missy, you too hansom! you pleay de debil wid de buckrah gentlemen to-night; fifty or a hundred of dem, me hear, like a-mad, preasin' for you beauty. Gad sen' dere doan't nobody killed before de mornin', dat all *me* say!" and he marvelled to see them, thus refreshed, return to the business of the evening with a ten times better will than when they began. The entertainment, he says, took place in the Court-house. The fresh night air was let in from all sides, and would have been more agreeable than it was if, in passing through the verandas and doors and windows, it had not swept over some hundreds of negroes and negresses who thronged these communications, and laughed and shouted and made remarks with tolerable freedom, so as to elicit sometimes from within a hint of cowskin.

"I hear you, Sam Swig; look out for fum-fum to-morrow,—hear 'ee?"

"S'ep me gad, massa, it not me! it dis Bungo; for him dam v'ice fabour mine. Hei, Bungo! is you not asheamed of you'self? my king!"*

* "For him" means "his:" "fabour" for "favour" means "resembles." The

And then such a supper ! which for solidity, the Ensign says, was fit to put before famished troopers in northern Europe. The viands disappeared, though, at a great rate ; and the flying of corks kept up a *feu-de-joie* till long after daybreak. Some few gentlemen, it is hinted, did not, after the third or fourth visit to the supper-room, leave that apartment again until they were assisted out into the sunshine ; and some others who did leave it stood about the walls of the ball-room, a little noisy and facetious. But offences like these were easily condoned ; for, says Clifton, everybody was tolerably unrestrained. Old Sandy Chisholm appeared there at first the very pink of good-humoured condescension. He joked with the young ladies, and had his cracks with the men. Everybody was ambitious of drinking healths with this great man, who bore the process exceedingly well, and seemed only to become more good-humoured and jocular (perhaps a little broader in his fun) as the hobnobbing went on. After supper, he swore he would have a reel ; and calling forth some of his countrymen and countrywomen, roared at the orchestra for "Loard Macdonald." But to the "spring" the native band was quite unequal : howbeit, a hard-baked Caledonian of the company, laying hold of a musician's *feedle*, made it as potent as the chanter of Alistair M'Alister, and set them working like dervishes. Old Chisholm vaulted and wriggled and tossed his nose in the air, and snapped his fingers, and, every time the tune recommenced, shouted like a Stentor. Never mind if it was in the tropics ; the fit was on, and the dance kept going with

such animation as was never seen before, and never since, except, perhaps, in Alloway Kirkyard. By Jupiter, it appears to have been great fun ! But the Ensign could not, he says, have given his description of it at the time, or for years after. His eyes took in all that was going on, but his mind was intent on far other things. He had gone to the ball determined to bring his suspense to an end, if only Arabella could be wrought for a while into a serious mood. But he was thrown off his balance, at first entering the room, by the sight of Mr Spence dancing with Miss Chisholm and looking much at his ease—nay, supremely happy. This need not have discouraged the Ensign, but it was in those days his disposition to be timid and diffident in matters of feeling. He was like enough to be shy and unready at the best of times ; but an unfavourable incident might have the effect of painfully increasing his bashfulness. He was conscious that his resolution had received a check, and angry with himself that such was the case ; while into his mind, as he stood gazing half entranced at the dancers, came some lines of a poet* who was known to youths of that time as well as Moore is to those of the present day :—

" Every passion but fond Love
Unto its own redress does move ;
But that alone the wretch inclines
To what prevents his own designs ;
Makes him lament, and sigh, and weep,
Disorder'd tremble, fawn and creep ;
Postures which render him despis'd,
Where he endeavours to be prized.
For women (born to be control'd)
Stoop to the forward and the bold."

After a while he succeeded in recovering his equanimity, and when the dance was over, he went up and

Jamaica negro commonly forms his possessive pronoun by putting "*for*" before the personal.

* Waller.

paid his compliments to Arabella with tolerable assurance. But unfortunately the young lady was not in the gracious mood which he had hoped for: she was engaged for another dance to Mr Spence, and for two after that to another gentleman; so that, for the present, Clifton was thrown out. He felt a little angry and resentful, and seeing Miss Salmon disengaged, he secured her hand for the next two dances. Flora was gracious enough, at any rate; and as the scene was new to both of them, they found plenty to talk about. She made amusing remarks on the queer customs and accidents, and soon raised her partner's spirits to a pleasanter level. She did not, however, fail to direct his attention to Arabella and Mr Spence, or to repeat the expression of her belief that they were happy lovers. Clifton had his own reasons for not wholly accepting this view of the case; but he was sufficiently pained and fretted at hearing such remarks; and Flora, content with having just suggested the idea, was too wise to allow herself to be associated in his mind with disagreeable thoughts, and so became sprightly and entertaining, drawing the young man into free conversation. She had discernment to perceive that when the *mauvaise honte* was once charmed away, his words were worth listening to; the sound of them was infinitely pleasant to her ear.

It was late in the evening before the Ensign's patience was rewarded by a dance with Arabella; but when this was obtained there did not come with it the slightest opportunity of pouring out the thoughts of which his heart was full. Arabella was as gay and animated as she could be. Her dress and ornaments, which would have been in excess for most styles of beauty, were not too much for her

sultana-like head and figure. Clifton had never seen her look so splendid. But he was not the only one who thought her admirable. Attentions were offered in profusion from all quarters, and the young lady did not seem in the least disposed to give herself up to any particular admirer. The ball was a failure, the young man saw, as regarded any clearing up of his prospects with his love. But on the other hand, he had no reason to complain of Arabella's father, who, coming across him, took him off for a drink, and then reproached him for not being more frequently at Blenheim, saying that when he was a youth, the "muckle deil" himself would not have kept him away from a place where he would have been welcomed by "twa bonnie lassies." He engaged Clifton to dine with him three days after, and told him to bring one of his brother officers, that he might begin to make their acquaintance.

Among the earliest departures was that of Mr and Miss Chisholm. Mrs and Miss Salmon had left them now, and rejoined the Doctor; and they (the Chisholms) had come down to stay the night at a house a short distance from the town. Clifton, rather wearied, had gone outside, and was wandering about a part of the verandas which, affording no view of the ball-room, was free from negroes. From hence he caught sight of Miss Chisholm in the ante-room attended by a following of young men all eagerly assisting to wrap her up. He went inside the doorway, intending, as he could do no more, to say "good night" as she should pass out, and perhaps to tell her of his engagement to dine at Blenheim, but not in the least to interfere with her present attendants. Indeed, not to appear to be particularly interested, he turned away a little, knowing

that she would have to pass him, and could hardly miss bidding him adieu. While he stood thus "cooling his heels," as the MS. has it, he felt a soft hand placed on his arm, and looking round to the owner of it, he was electrified to find it was Miss Chisholm's. She had left all her beaux behind, and come up to him as deliberately as if he had been ordered to wait for her. "I will just step outside until papa is quite ready," she said; and then bowing to her deserted followers, she went on to the steps. The road was full of carriages and negroes, the latter of whom kept up a stunning jabber, calling up carriages, wrangling, and butting each other with their heads. Pausing there a moment in the bright starlight, and throwing her weight a little on Clifton's arm, she said in a clear, gentle key, very different from that of the Babel of negroes, and therefore audible to him — "You have not seemed happy to-night; has anything distressed you?" Taken aback as he had been, and notwithstanding that he was much inclined to be on his dignity, the young man did not waste this opportunity. "I have been unhappy, and disappointed too," he answered. "I came here hoping, Miss Chisholm, to have heard from your lips whether I was ever to be happy again or not."

"From me!" echoed Arabella. "Oh, if I could make you happy, you may be sure I would do it."

"You would! Oh, if I could only believe you meant that seriously!" and he took possession of the hand that lay on his arm, and continued, "Tell me in earnest that I *may* be happy."

"Nonsense!" she answered, but in very soft accents, and with her dark eyes resting gently on his face. "There is papa in the carriage, and waving his whip for me; we must

go to him." As she stepped down towards the road a dozen niggers sang out, "Hei! clear de way dere!" But they simply pushed each other about without clearing the way at all, until a man with a long whip dashed in among them. Arabella got safely to the carriage, which was an open one, built for only two, with a flat board across the top supported on four standards, to keep off the sun. As she bade the young man good night, she said she hoped he would be happier now; and then taking her seat beside her parent, away they drove, escorted by two negroes on mules, and followed by her maids and her father's valet or boy on foot, each of these personal attendants carrying on the head a bandbox or a trunk. It is uncertain how long the Ensign stood there in the road-way looking out his soul after the enchanting figure. He roused himself at last, and thought he did feel happy, although rather stunned. Presently he went back to the rooms, exhibiting a liveliness which none had ever seen in him before.

"What the deuce has come to Clifton?" asked one of his brother officers of another.

"Slightly inebriated, I should say," replied Worth, who was the person referred to.

He was, but it wasn't with wine or strong drink.

After this the melancholy ceased, and there was frequent visiting at Blenheim, the young man standing fire capitally when they rallied him. As for poor Spence, it was his turn now to feel anxious, and even Miss Salmon could hardly persuade him that his chance was still good. Indeed Miss Salmon herself was much exercised by what she heard, and began to make some very particular inquiries concerning Arabella's fortune, and so on—eliciting answers which rather set her thinking.

Sandy Chisholm seemed to take very kindly to the Ensign on acquaintance, and for a few weeks the life of the latter was an Elysium.

There must be breaks, however, in every happiness, and it was a little interruption of the current of bliss when Mr Chisholm one day, with a grave face, asked Ensign Clifton to give him a few minutes in his private room, and began their colloquy with, "Noo, young sir." The old fellow spoke as kindly and sensibly as could be. He said he had observed Clifton's attentions to his daughter, as he doubted not others had done also, and the time seemed to him to have come when either these frequent visits must be discontinued, or, if ever renewed at all, renewed on an understood footing. Hereupon the young officer spoke up as eloquently and as heartily as a parent could have desired, and Chisholm took his hand and wrung it. He did not, however, depart from his grave tone; but after telling the suitor how entirely he had won his esteem, went on to say that so young a man had no right to make an engagement to marry without the consent of his relations. He (old Sandy) knew the world, and thought old heads and young heads might view such matters differently. His "lassie" was not that forlorn or homely that she need marry into a family where they would look askance at her. And the short and the long of it was that, before he would allow the matter to proceed further, the Ensign must obtain his father's full consent, keeping away honourably from Arabella until such consent could be produced. It was a cruel sentence, but Clifton saw the propriety of it, and said he was quite certain his friends would not, could not, object; which Sandy

said drily that he was glad to hear. After some time Clifton said that if he was to be banished from his beloved he would rather not remain close to her, and that he would try and obtain leave (short as was the time that he had been out) and plead his cause himself, returning with his credentials.

"As ye like, sir," said old Sandy; "but remember, ye'll tell yer freens aiverything about Bell—the hail truth, ye understan'."

Clifton readily promised this, thinking that he understood the other's meaning, and believing that the more particularly he described "Bell" and everything connected with her, the more his family would exult in his having obtained such a prize; and then with much entreaty he obtained leave to spend another hour with Arabella.

Unfortunately he did *not* quite understand, poor, simple fellow, what old Chisholm meant; but he was soon to be enlightened. It has been said that Miss Salmon, in her chagrin, made many inquiries concerning Arabella; and she soon heard a good deal which she felt certain the Ensign did not know, and with which, in her judgment, he ought to be acquainted. Her chief informant was a middle-aged native* lady, whose daughter had married an officer in the regiment; and this lady undertook, at Flora's solicitation, "to have a little talk" with Mr Clifton. Now that young officer, in order the more effectually to interest the adjutant and all influential men, ending of course with the colonel, in his petition for leave, went to stay a few days at headquarters, so that Mrs Evitt (that was the matron's name) soon found her opportunity. She bade her son-in-law to bring him to her house one evening; and having

* This does not mean a coloured lady, but a white Creole.

established herself *tête-à-tête* with him at cribbage, began to congratulate him on the favour with which he was received at Blenheim. He, as she expected, treated this as raillery, and their game went on swimmingly for a time. At length the lady remarked, "Indeed, then, you may laugh, Mr Clifton, but there's many a young officer that wouldn't mind winning Miss Chisholm, spite of all her drawbacks. She'll have a finer fortune than many a young miss that's been honestly come by. Hah, there! one for his nob!"

"Mrs Evitt," answered Clifton, turning very red, "I don't understand you. *Drawbacks! honestly come by!* How can you think of using such expressions in reference to Miss Chisholm?"

"How can I think? You haven't scored that five. Why, there's no scandal, I hope, in alluding to what is notorious. Surely you know very well who Arabella's mother is, and that the old lady is to be seen now on one of Mr Chisholm's estates—an old mulatto who tells fortunes."

"You are joking," faltered the Ensign, turning now from red to pale. "Really you ought not—to—to——"

"Ought, or ought not," proceeded the lady, "there's nobody doubts that Mammy Cis (that's the old crone's name) is mother to the brilliant Arabella."

"For God's sake, don't trifle with—with—don't——"

"Take up your cards, Mr Clifton, and go on. It's your play. I'm heartily glad you disclaim all intention towards Arabella, since you appear not to know her origin."

"I know that she is Mr Chisholm's daughter," answered he, grandly, "and as charming a young woman——"

"Hoity-toity! Mr Chisholm's daughter?" interrupted the not very refined lady. "It's Mr Chisholm's pleasure to make a pet of her, and to bring her out in state as his 'bairn,' as he calls her; but folks might call her by another name if they weren't afraid of flashing eyes and angry looks."

"Call her! what dare they call her?" shrieked the maddened lad.

"They might call her his *slave*. Heavens, don't bite me, but that's the truth! He might *sell* her instead of marrying her; for although not very dark, she isn't white by law—only a quadroon."

The young man got to his chamber he knew not how. He was hardly sane. Here was a pretty account with which to introduce an intended daughter-in-law to an old proud family! He felt in his soul that it was true. Arabella's prohibition of all mention of his visit to Higson's Gap, and Mr Chisholm's hints about the whole truth, were intelligible enough now.*

Clifton had not to sue for his leave—the doctors got that as soon as it was safe to move him; for he had a violent fever—a *seasoning* fever, as knowing people called it. But Mrs Evitt and Miss Salmon knew what kind of seasoning had produced it,—and Miss Salmon also had a fever. Sandy Chisholm, and Arabella too, came down to see the sick man while the fever was running its course, but he could recognise no one; and when he was

* The selection by one of these old sinners of a daughter or of daughters, to be educated as gentlewomen, and acknowledged, was by no means uncommon. Such a selection involved a complete separation from the mother at the time of the daughter proceeding to school, if not before. Maternal and filial affections were generally very mild in such cases—the young ladies desired to have the relationship forgotten, and the elder ladies philosophically acquiesced in ignoring it.

free of the fever, and hovering between life and death, none but a nurse was allowed near him: and he was carried on board ship in a hammock, with a thick veil over his face.

The blow of course fell as the reader may expect. Clifton did not return to Jamaica, but wrote like a good and feeling young man to Mr Chisholm, telling him that he had, as he had been desired, told everything to his friends, who would not hear of the match; that he had never, before leaving Jamaica, opened his lips to a soul concerning his proposal; and that he trusted his short visit there would be forgotten by most people before the letter he was writing could come to hand. He had made his offer with a sincere heart, believing that he could win over his friends to his wishes; but, alas! Mr Chisholm knew better than he. He implored Arabella, whom he still loved as fondly as ever, to forgive and forget him,—and a great deal more betokening honest remorse.

Mr Chisholm, as he had foreseen the possibility of such an issue as this, bore the disappointment with equanimity. "I was no' mistaken in the laddie," he said to himself. "He's been aye honourable and true, and there's not a word of hypocrisy in a' the letter. I'd have loved him weel as a son-in-law, and the connection—but there, it's of nae use encouraging idle regrets: what maun be, maun be; and there's as gude fish in the sea as ever cam oot of it. As for Bell, she'll maybe greet sairly eneugh; but she's young, and she'll do weel belyve." Shrewd as he was, though, the old gentleman miscalculated altogether the effect which this news would have upon his daughter. He expected her to be affected as an

English or Scotch girl would have been by such a reverse. But he was quite unprepared for the burst of passion with which Arabella received the communication. She wept and shrieked; then poured out a volume of reproaches against Clifton, whom she said she would spit upon and trample in the dust, raging and stamping while she thus raved, as if she were literally crushing her lost lover to pieces; then, exhausted by her violence, she threw herself on the floor, weeping bitterly again, and calling upon her beloved by every endearing name. The variations of her fury continued so long that the old planter was perfectly shocked, and even alarmed, at the paroxysms. Reasoning with her was quite out of the question; but after trying for a long while to coax and soothe her, he spoke a little sternly, and tried to touch her pride. He told her that this was not the behaviour of a gentle body, but more like the savagery of the people on the estate, who were unable in any circumstances to control themselves. This, however, did very little good; and when the girl became more subdued, it was because she had expended her strength. She then turned sullen, lay on the floor, and moaned or threatened. It was a most pitiable case. The old man hesitated from shame to send for a medical man, and the young lady's negro attendants were of no use to him in the circumstances. "My, sar! someting mus' upon her mind," one abigail said; while another one brought her a piece of lead to bite (and Arabella bit it), saying, "She will better after she kick lilly bit." No food passed her lips that day, and she never spoke rationally. When she was not in the sullens, she was in such a violent fit as has been described. Of course this could not last, and after some hours Arabella

became somewhat calmer; but she seemed a changed girl. She was careless of her appearance, would scarcely eat or drink, and lay sobbing and moaning the half of her time. To speak of anything connected with her trouble was impossible, for it made her rage like a pythoness. Her poor father was almost out of his wits with alarm, and the negro servants had a dreadful time of it. One of them having imprudently hinted, "I think missy mus' a crossed in love," was despatched under escort to the driver, with an order that she should receive a sound flogging. Old Sandy watched the course of her temper; and as soon as he could let her be seen without shame, he entreated Miss Salmon to come and stay at the house, judging rightly enough that the presence of an English lady, before whom she had always appeared as a person of wealth and distinction, would prove a greater restraint on her humours than that of natives with whom her infancy had been familiar,—and Miss Salmon came. The old gentleman prepared Flora for the condition in which she would find her friend, and hinted that they had received disagreeable news concerning some one in whom they were interested in England. But Flora was very little behind him in knowledge of what had happened. Where there are negroes about, nothing can be kept very quiet. It was known all over the neighbouring estates, and from them had passed "a Beea"—that is to say, down to Montego Bay—that Arabella in a fit of passion had well-nigh lost her reason; and Flora was not slow to guess what it all meant. An old negress on the estate was very eloquent concerning the case: "I is nat supprise, for true; doan't me know him modda, hei? dat

Cissy de moas' passiony pusson upon de prappety before him turn wise woman. Befo' dis creecha barn, him hab terrible fits ob violence. I is nat astanish."

Whether Arabella cared to see Flora or not, is doubtful; but she did make an effort to be more reasonable after her visitor arrived. Yet to Miss Salmon the change in her was very marked. She had lost all care about her appearance, and, indeed, seemed to take interest in nothing. Her looks were sadly altered, and though she did not always refuse to converse or to join in amusement, she would sit for hours silent or else weeping.

Mr Spence, who could hardly fail to perceive, after the ball at Montego Bay, that Clifton had distanced him, did nevertheless make his appearance again at Blenheim after the Ensign sailed for England. But he no longer got any encouragement. Arabella, there is reason to believe, had wholly and determinedly given her heart to the young soldier, and was true in her affection, not wishing to practise hypocrisy or coquetry during her lover's absence. Miss Salmon, however, the first time she encountered Spence, mysteriously hinted that the ground might be clear now, and urged him to come and try his fortune again; and this probably she did partly out of pure goodwill to Arabella, whose melancholy might possibly be dissipated by the attentions of another young man more readily than by other means. At the same time, be it remembered, it was expected that Clifton would soon rejoin his regiment; and so, if Arabella should accept another lover before he came, it might be as well for her and for Flora too. Spence, who had declined further competition only because he believed it to be hope-

less, was not unwilling to recommence his suit. He renewed his addresses; and being by nature an easy-going, cheerful fellow, he was certainly a desirable guest at that season. The fear was as to how Arabella might receive him, connected as he was with the memory of the voyage out and of the chief incidents of the courtship. But she set all minds at rest by greeting him with rather more kindness than she had of late been accustomed to accord to any one. Notwithstanding this, she did not improve in health or spirits, but still underwent the fits of sullenness and despondency. What to her friends was more painful still, was her indifference to her personal appearance and to the observances of society. She went about with her luxuriant hair tangled and disordered: often she would not be at the trouble of putting on a dress, but shuffled along in a dressing-gown, with loose slippers on her feet, and her stockings falling about her ankles; and she might occasionally be seen in this garb on a low seat, with her elbows on her knees and her face on her hands, rocking herself to and fro. In fact, she was unconsciously following the customs of the negroes. When told of her failings in this way, she would for a time endeavour to correct them; but she soon relapsed. She fancied that she saw visions, all indicative of an early death; and the negroes, who either had heard her utter words referring to these, or else recognised in her the symptoms which indicate a negro visionary, quite adopted the idea that she was in some way doomed.

"Where you takin' dat roas'-fowl, Patience?" asked one of Arabella's *troupe* of another.

"I is takin' it away from Miss Bell. She not goin' eat it."

"My! it smell nice too; and de ham, and de ochra saace look good. She doan't no better, now?"

"Better! no; she won't better."

"You tink she goin' die?"

"I can't tell, for true. What questions you ax, Iris! How is me to know?"

"Whisper, Patience. I hear Miss Dinah say she see duppy."

"Hei! Well, she really look like it."

"It bad when duppy come. Life doan't sweet noting after dat. You ever see duppy?"

"Me! chaw! my king! Me doan't want for see duppy. Me hope for live long, and be happy wid a sweet nyounng buckra dat come court me."

"Buckra! chaw! For you sweet-heart black Billy de driver. It better dan a fun to hear about de buckra."

"Hei! you doan't b'lieve? 'Top and you will see. Him really charmin'. Him 'kin fabour lily. My! how me lub him! But Miss Bell, now; if she grieve, it will bad. She come of a sad race. Her granny, ole Frolic, pine away and die."

"But Mammy Cis no pine away."

"Hush-h-h; no 'peak of Mammy Cis. She will kill for me sweet buckra, and gib me crooked yeyes."

"She will a mad 'posin' Miss Bell die."

"Why she no come and send away de debil dat want for kill Miss Bell?"

Here a cook from the kitchen-door shouted "Patience!" and the two young ladies shouted "Hei!" and separated.

Sandy Chisholm, greatly grieved and annoyed to see his daughter, of whom he was very fond, and in whose beauty and accomplishments he had taken such pride, so afflicted, decided that a thorough change of

air and scene would be the best remedy to make trial of. Although he could not without great inconvenience quit the island, he began to make arrangements for a long absence, intending to take the unhappy girl to entirely new scenes—that is to say, to the continent of Europe. There was, however, a good deal to be thought of before he could turn his back upon his possessions.

We now look once more toward Higson's Gap, where Mammy Cis one morning was in a state of great excitement, and despatched little Pinkie to the busha to let him know that she wanted to see him. "Whew!" said the young man; "here's a mess now. I've shot at a pigeon and killed a crow"—the meaning of which exclamation was supposed to be, that Mammy Cis was enamoured of him, having fallen a victim to fascinations and embellishments which he had been using for some days to subjugate a coquette in the neighbourhood. As a bit of fun, the dangerous rascal rather enjoyed the idea of the *affaire*; and he even speculated upon the bearing which he should adopt in case of his being introduced by the fond old creature to immaterial acquaintances. He finished his breakfast briskly, rather curious to see how the wise woman would conduct herself. When he got to the ground-floor he found her outside her own proper apartment, sitting on a bench and rocking herself from side to side, occasionally groaning as she did so.

"How d'ye, mammy?" the busha said; and hereupon the old body looked up, showing a very sad countenance.

"How d'ye, busha?" she answered.

"You wanted to see me."

"I have to tell you, sar, dat I shall want to use de big house dis evening. You will please open it and make dem sweep away de dus'."

There is, on nearly every estate, a larger house than that occupied by the busha, kept for the convenience of the proprietor in case he should choose to reside. It was this house that Mammy Cis desired to have at her disposal for a while. The overseer could not tell what to make of such a request, and began to suspect that the old lady was a little cracked. "Have you got an order from Big Massa?" he asked.

"No, sar, I have not seen de Big Massa," she replied; "but dis mus' be done. I only want de place for to-night. I will keep you from all blame, sar."

"Yes, that's all very fine," said the busha, "but——"

"Sar, what I say I mean, and you know dat I don't always speak for noting. You will please to say if you will do what I wish, or wedder you will take de consequence."

The "consequence" was an ugly nut. If it meant only a complaint to Mr Chisholm, he thought he could defend himself by saying that he had no warrant for indulging the old woman; but if it meant a berth next his predecessor over there, he had no fancy for it at all. Conceiving as he did that he had in this world a very distinct mission in which the fair sex was largely interested, he did not quite like coming face to face with cold obstruction.

She let him ponder quietly. After a minute he said, "Well, I don't know what harm it can do. I take a great responsibility, but I suppose you can make all right with the proprietor. Yes, I will have the house opened."

"Tank you, sar. All will be well."

"But, mammy, what the deuce is the matter? You are not like yourself."

"Sar, great trouble come upan me. My chile is sick, and I greatly fearful for de end. Ebberytting look black. You remember when you bring the nyoung soldier buckra to see me?"

"Certainly; but what has that to do with it?"

"My good sar, I see de same cloud dat darken all now when one of dem, de bashful one, come before me. Eber since, de same cloud black about me an' my chile. And now she sicken as if de duppy call her. It is de spirit and not de body dat bad."

"Well, I hope things will take a favourable turn yet, mammy," the busha said.

The old lady busied herself that day in seeing that the big house was properly cleaned and dusted, and tried in that way to keep down the dark presages that were oppressing her. Towards evening she attired herself in a showy robe which had at some time cost a great deal of money. She put silk stockings on her feet, and uncomfortably confined the same in satin shoes. Rings were on her fingers, bracelets round her arms, and on her head the ordinary handkerchief was replaced by a huge yellow turban, rich with pink flowers and tinsel. The principal rooms in the large house were lighted up after sundown, and the old lady took her seat there in great state, ordering several negroes to be about the building in readiness to obey her behests.

Mammy Cis had been, as has been hinted, a favourite slave; and while her charms were effective, had no doubt enjoyed a vast deal

of barbaric grandeur. She had been indulged in all kinds of ornaments and attires that could set off her beauty. She had been allowed to tyrannise over other slaves; and had enjoyed every kind of luxury according to her ideas. She was entirely ignorant, and in her grandest days became but little less uncouth than the negroes in the field. By consequence, when her bodily charms began to fade she was supplanted by a younger slave, and relegated to the retirement in which she was first introduced in this narrative. Of course the condition of such a person was absolutely according to the will of her owner. But generally, faded favourites had not to complain of illiberality on the part of their masters. If they relapsed into savagery, it was because that state was more congenial to them than civilised life. They liked salt-fish and plantain better than the dainty fare which they might have consumed. They liked to stow away in old trunks the finery of their former days, to be paraded, possibly, on some exceptionally grand occasions; but the finery was never allowed to encroach upon the ease of everyday life. Above all, they enjoyed the dirt in which the negroes lived, and preferred to "pig it." With all this, they were fond of reminding those about them that they were not as ordinary slaves, and that "they could, an' if they would," show themselves to be of considerable importance.

In Mammy Cis's case there was still a link to connect her with her ancient glory. She had a daughter whom it was the pleasure of her lord to distinguish above his other offspring, whom he allowed to bear his surname, and whom he did his best to bring up as an English gentlewoman. But this link had

been, according to the custom of that society, reduced to the weakest tenuity. The first step in Anglicising the child was to separate her from her mother. Inter-course between them was more and more restricted as the girl grew up; on both sides the ties of nature were to a great extent effaced, but more especially on the side of the daughter. Children thus recognised by their fathers have in many instances disowned their mothers, especially while prosperous. Arabella had not been utterly unnatural, but she had been tolerably unmindful of her dark parent. And the old lady, however contemptible she might choose to appear to ordinary people, always endeavoured to be a person of some dignity in the eyes of her child, who had only too much encouragement to despise her.

It is not with certainty known how long Mammy Cis had been *en retraite* when she first took to divination. Neither can it be determined whether her greatness was thrust upon her by the invisible world, or whether she took to it as a good old-lady-like vice. She possessed, says the MS., some very curious powers, which it is useless to deny, or to daff aside as shallow imposture. How or why she came by it there is no pretence at explaining.* But to return.

On the day of which we have been speaking, Sandy Chisholm had gone from home on business, and was not expected to return till next evening. In the afternoon Arabella issued orders through her attendants that a mule with a soft pad on it, and a man to lead it, were to be ready in the cool of the

evening. She apologised to Miss Salmon for leaving her for a short time, and deputed Mr Spence to entertain the young lady. When the evening came she set off quietly and secretly, saying nothing of her destination until she was about a mile from Blenheim. Then she informed her escort (consisting of one man and three women, slaves) of her intention to proceed by the least frequented paths that could be found to Higson's Gap. There she arrived about dusk; and desiring all her attendants, save one woman, to remain without and to keep out of sight, she dismounted and went stealthily towards the busha's house, the girl who had come with her professing to know well how to guide her. But as they crept along, the slave-girl's arm was touched by an unseen hand, and the voice of little Pinkie whispered, "Miss Juny, de mammy say you is to come to the big house."

"Who can have told?" said Arabella, amazed.

"Chaw, missy! nobody tell," said Juno; "Mammy Cis know everyting. Come, den."

The last words meant, "Let us change our course." This was accordingly done; and the party, guided by Pinkie, made for the mansion. At the bottom of the stair (which was outside the house) two negro women were in waiting, who exclaimed "Hei!" when they distinguished the figures through the gloom. These preceded Arabella up the steps, and ushered her into the large hall, which was tolerably well lighted, and which looked brilliant to persons who had just come from the darkness outside. Mammy

* Since Ensign Clifton wrote this remark, the world has been informed how the Empress Josephine was in her early youth told by a coloured woman that she would wear a crown.

Cis, in gorgeous array, sat on a faded sofa, attended by two or three more women. She rose as Arabella crossed the threshold, and said, "Welcome, Miss Bell; how d'ye, my child?" At the same moment the glasses on a large sideboard at the end of the room began to jingle in an extraordinary manner; presently the floor shook, and a noise as of a multitude tramping was heard as it were under the house. The negroes looked aghast, and were for an instant speechless with terror. Then they made a rush towards the door, where Arabella was still standing. But the old woman's voice arrested them. "Where you goin' now, you creechas? 'Tand quiet, I tell you; nothing goin' for hurt you. De eartquake pass." It was all over; it had not lasted three minutes; but it cast a mysterious awe over this meeting of the mother and daughter. There was no embrace, nor any demonstration of affection between them. Arabella said, "How d'ye, mammy?" and was conducted by Cis to the sofa, where they both seated themselves.

"You have come to live in the big house now, mammy?" inquired Arabella, opening the conversation.

"No, Miss Bell, I live where I did. But dat is not a place to receive a fine nyoung leady dat live more finer dan a princess."

"Yes," said Arabella; "I live daintily, and I have more than I wish for—everything splendid and delightful; but it does not make me happy."

"My chile," answered the mother, "I know what it is to live in grandeur, and I know your fader can be an open-handed man. I know, too, dat happiness don't come always wid fine tings."

"But, mammy, if you have come

here to receive me, how could you know I was coming? I never spoke of it to a soul till after I left Blenheim a little before sundown."

"I knew dis mornin' early dat you would come see me before midnight. Eberyting prepare dis mornin'. But now, Miss Bell, you will take some coffee and refresh yourself. After dat I talk to you."

On a sign to the women, they proceeded to some part of the establishment, from which after a time they returned bearing two large cups of coffee, already sweetened and mixed with goat's milk, no waiter being used. While the women were absent, Mammy Cis had made inquiries concerning Sandy Chisholm, and as to whether there was any pickninny about Blenheim that he was at all likely to make a "bairn" of. Being satisfied on these points, she exhorted the young lady to drink her coffee, and herself set the example of so doing. When this process had been gone through, the old lady ordered all the negro women out of the apartment.

"You is sick at heart, my chile?" said Mammy Cis, when she and Arabella were alone.

"Yes, mammy, I am very, very miserable, and I feel as if I should die."

"What misfortune come to make you sad?"

"No misfortune; only my heart sinks, and nothing can raise it."

"Dere come a buckra soldier lad here, some time ago, who bring a shadow to de house. You sure he not bring de sorrow?"

"Oh, mammy, yes; you saw him. He told me so. Mammy, you are wise. You can kill him. Do kill him, and my heart will be light again."

"Ah! dis is de matter, den," the

sorceress said. "De nyoung man doan't love you back."

"Oh kill him! kill him!" said Arabella, getting into one of her paroxysms.

"I think the nyoung man not bad. He seem soft and gentle. He please me."

"Yes, mammy, he *is* soft and gentle. He is the dearest man alive. I would die for him. But he is far away in England, thinking nothing of the quadroon girl. Tell me, mammy, is there a hope that he will be true and will come out again?"

"It was dark about him when he was here. It is all dark now. I can see nothing clear about him, only as at de fust—trouble to me and mine concerning him."

"Cannot you tell me, mammy, whether the light will come again? I will believe it if you say so."

"My chile, I can see noting plain concerning you."

"But what *do* you see?"

"It is all dark about you. I can see neider good man at your side, nor pickninny at your bres', and my heart doan't tell of noting pleasant."

"Then it is as I feared," returned Arabella, placidly. "I am going to a far country. I have often seen this fate in the distance; now it is near."

"Your heart is good?"

"Yes, for death my heart is good. I thought you could have given me comfort. At least you show me that no comfort is to be had."

The sorceress did not reply. And as Arabella looked towards her for her answer it was plain that her thoughts were elsewhere. Her rapt gaze and motionless figure attested it. The quadroon girl sat still for a few minutes, until the old woman's form became less rigid; then she pressed her arm.

"I see you meet de gentle buckra

by de cotton-tree in Broadrent Gully. But it not a joyful meeting. De shadow dere still, and you is pale as death."

"I shall meet him," were Arabella's words; "if it is in death, I shall meet him. Let me die, then."

Arabella had now risen to go, for it was getting late. "Go in peace, my chile," said the old lady, as she took Arabella's two hands in hers and pressed them gently. "De Lard sen' you better tings dan I can see for you."

And the young girl slid silently out into the night, and summoning her slave, made rapidly for the entrance-gate. As she turned out of the little square of buildings the busha happened to have come to the window to take a goblet of cool water off the sill, and a gleam of moonlight showed him a figure such as he well knew the estate did not own. Whereupon that young man, persuaded that some lady of distinction had fallen a victim to his charms, rushed to his toilet-table and gilded the refined gold of his person as much as was practicable in a few seconds. After that he sat in agony of expectation for some time, and passed a feverish, restless night—the first of many feverish, restless nights. And while he was waiting in the flurry of a vague hope, Arabella was proceeding homeward in the horror of a vague despair. Heavy clouds obscured the moon, and made the heavens as gloomy as the chambers of her heart.

The desponding races can be induced by an augury, a prophecy, or some equally trifling cause, to abandon hope or desire of living. Once they take a freak of this sort there is no turning them from it. They are as resolute to part with life as people of another temperament would be to preserve it.

Arabella was observed after this to be visited by frequent fits of excitement and depression: the former made her eyes flash like brilliants, and brought bright spots of colour to her now sunken cheek. She scarcely consumed food, and it was a marvel how she subsisted. Her father had already selected a gentleman to act as attorney for his estates, and now pushed on his preparations for departure vigorously.

One day when Mr Spence was exerting himself to amuse her, and Miss Salmon was not present, Arabella, being in a very low condition, for the first time gave way before him to weeping and moaning. The young man had presence of mind to ask no question and to exhibit no surprise, but he redoubled his efforts to cheer her. Suddenly she cast her glistening eyes upon him and said, "You are very good, Mr Spence, to try and comfort me. But it is of no use; I know my fate."

Spence replied that her fate was, no doubt, to be a healthy, happy woman, admired and beloved. But this remark somehow disturbed her, and her humour changed. There came the bright flashing eye again, and the excited, imperious manner. "I shall not be long here, you may rest assured. You will live and be happy, I hope. But if you care anything for me, there is a thing I will bind you to do for my sake."

"I shall only be too happy to serve you, Miss Chisholm."

"That is well. Now listen to me. You recollect—you recollect our fellow-passenger in the Berkeley Castle. I mean, of course, Mr—Mr Clifton," and as she pronounced his name she rose and stamped on the floor, and gave way to great rage. Then coming up to Spence and speaking in a calm voice, though her whole frame quivered with emotion, she went on: "You will

go to England and kill him, for he has killed me. I give this to you as a charge: don't dare to disobey." This scene impressed Spence very profoundly. He perceived, or thought he perceived, that Clifton had acted infamously; and, in generous indignation, he thought it would be a chivalrous act to dare the traitor to the field. But he did not take for granted everything that Arabella said about her own condition. She had youth on her side, and might probably outlive, and learn to smile over, her sad anticipations. It was not long, however, before he saw reason to be less confident on this head. Miss Chisholm looked worse and worse, and all her strange symptoms were aggravated. By-and-by a curious rumour got about among the slaves, and soon found its way to the white people. "Hei! missy nyam dirt," which meant, *eats dirt*,—and imputed a disorder not uncommon among negroes belonging to a race inhabiting a certain region on the African coast. These tribes were known to be addicted to melancholy and suicide; and when they fell into their despondency, they were observed to swallow at times a small portion of a certain kind of clay, the provocation to do which was never understood, so far as Clifton was informed, although the fact that such a practice indicated the worst form of hypochondria was undoubted. As all the negro tribes were not liable to this affliction, it was made a reproach to certain breeds of them. "For you modda nyam dirt"—that is, "your mother ate dirt"—being a common form of reviling. It is to be feared that Arabella had only too truly fallen into this dreadful infirmity which was incidental to her mother's blood. Her father heard of the appearance of the symptom with horror and alarm.

He completed his preparations now with all speed, engaged passages, and only on the day preceding that of embarkation told the afflicted girl of the proposed change. She received the announcement without showing emotion of any kind, and simply acquiescing in the arrangement.

A little before sunset that evening the sky was black with clouds, and as the night fell, there came on one of those sudden storms with which dwellers in the tropics are so well acquainted. Wind, lightning, torrents of rain; nature convulsed, as if she meant to wreck herself; and then after a few hours everything looking placid and bright, as though there had been no tempest.

The next morning there was an alarm—a great running to and fro—the young lady was nowhere to be found. Her father fancied that, in a fit of mania, she had taken to flight; and he went himself and started all his neighbours to scour the roads and adjacent villages. The negroes seemed to see the hand of fate in her disappearance, and took part in the search without hope of success, and uttering all kinds of melancholy reflections, such as, “I know it mus’ come.” “She didn’t care for live.” “Me hear de duppy call her in de storm: him call her name.” “O Lard, she gone; and we doan’t see her no more.”

The search continued all day, but in vain. Sandy Chisholm was in despair when he found the evening approaching; and Mr Spence, who had loyally kept at his side and assisted him, began to fear the worst. They were some way from home, and pausing to decide on what direction they next should take, when the overseer from Higson’s Gap rode up and said he had been tracking them for the last hour.

“Have you anything to tell us of my bairn?” asked poor Sandy.

“Only this, sir, that Mammy Cis bade me follow you and say that you must go to the silk-cotton-tree in Broadrent Gully.”

Mr Chisholm and Mr Spence looked at each other, each wishing to know what the other thought of this proposal. It was a place they would not have thought of; but Sandy remarked, “Cis is wonderfully sagacious sometimes. I can suggest nothing better. Suppose we go.”

Broadrent Gully was a cleft on the mountain-side opening an extensive view over many miles of variegated country, down to the blue sea. It was a place for sight-seers and for pleasure-parties. But not only did it afford a glorious view—it was in itself a romantic and remarkable locality. The bottom of the cleft, which meandered charmingly, was the boundary between two distinct formations of ground. On one side of it—that is, to the right, as you looked towards the sea—the rock rose steep and sharp as a whole, but beautifully broken with rocky pillars and projections, interspersed with slopes and faces of earth, from which sprang forth grasses, shrubs, and trees in much variety. The rocks, where their shapes could be distinguished, were covered with mosses of many colours; the thinly-clad spaces diminished in number and size towards the summit of the steep; and the trees became larger and stronger, the height being crowned with large timber, which was the border of a primeval forest that stretched away for miles over the mountain. On the left side of the chasm the slope was generally much easier. Here, too, the ground was irregular; but it was not so ragged but that there was a turf all over it, which spread

itself in graceful irregularity. It had to rise gradually almost to the height of the opposite steep; but it had shown the waywardness of a spoiled beauty or an Irishman's pig in taking its direction, and thus many a dint and fold diversified its breadth. Trees stood about on this side, but they were single or in very small groups. The distinction between the two sides of the cleft was not invariable. In one or two instances the rock stretched across at a low level, and penetrated a little way into the grass bank on the other side. Where this occurred there was a sudden step in the bottom of the cleft, which would make a waterfall when a stream should be running in the channel. One of these outbreaks of the rock, bringing over with it some of the wild grass and foliage, and showing in itself charming forms and colours, was marked by the growth, at its extremity, of a gigantic silk-cotton-tree, the straight stem of which measured its height against the opposite precipice, and was hardly surpassed. When the waters flowed, there was a fine cascade at this point, and the general beauty of the spot made the cotton-tree noted; indeed it was a trysting-place for lovers, and had many legends.

One might have supposed that the grassy side of this chasm had been gently sloped away on purpose, to let the beams of the western sun glow on the steep side. At any rate, one easily perceived that, had there been no slope, some of the most gorgeous of tropical views would never have been known.

But if the fair-weather aspect of this gully was beautiful, it was in its war-paint or stormy dress frightful and desolate. The winds roared up and down it as if it had been formed for their boisterous diversions. The waters, rapidly collect-

ing off the hillsides, made there a general confluence, and poured along it with irresistible force, leaping over obstacles and down falls, and making such a tumult as nothing but the voice of the wind could overbear. The shrubs bending before the blast, and the agonised groaning of the trees above as their branches were wrenched round or torn from the trunks, had their part in the wild scene; and the volume of water, not dropping, but streaming from the clouds, made a mist which robbed objects of their outlines, and brought obscurity to intensify the effect. The darkness of the clouds was doubly dark by contrast with the usual brightness, and the glance of the lightning through the awful gloom was almost too much for mortal senses.

When Sandy Chisholm and his party made their way to Broadrent Gully, a heavenly evening seemed to deny the possibility of an elemental war having raged there recently. The beams were gilding the precipitous faces, and there bringing out the hues of Paradise; there was not wind enough to stir a leaf; only the brawling torrent—which, though much diminished in bulk, had not yet run out—bore testimony to the convulsion that had been.

As they approached the silk-cotton-tree, Sandy Chisholm, elder as he was, was the first to catch sight of something remarkable, and to rush forward. The others, following quickly, assisted him to raise from the earth the object of which they had been so long in search—the beauteous Arabella, silent now and motionless. Was it possible that she could yet live? Her garments and hair were soaked with wet; the form was stiffened; and as her head hung over the father's arm, it was seen that the large gold drop in the

ear had been melted into a shapeless mass, while the other drop retained its form. The hair, too, had the appearance of being singed. "My God!" sobbed out the old man, "she's been thunder-stricken." It was even so.

I have forborne to quote more from this melancholy part of the story. The reader must imagine the consternation and the distress caused by this sad event. One so lovely and so apparently fortunate taken away by such a miserable death! The next morning, soon after sunrise, Arabella Chisholm was laid in the earth; and not many weeks after, was reared over her the tomb which visitors to that part of the island are to this day taken to see.

The monument was for a long time a great gathering-place for the black people, especially the females, who asked every educated passer-by to read to them the inscription. Patience and Iris had one evening heard it from the mouth of a white person, and were proceeding to moralise on it.

Iris. Dem tell out for her fader

name big; why dem say noting about her modda?

Patience. Chaw! de modda isn't of no consequence. 'Posing a pusion's fader big man, any creecha will do for a modda.

Iris. Den, when your buckra come marry you, perhapsin you will bring him gubnas, an' big plantas, an' marchants? eh, Patience?

Patience. Perhapsin so; no make for you fun, Iris, here by de ny young missy grave.

Iris. Me is not making fun, my dear. Only doan't tink too much upon black Billy till after de fus' one come all safe; for fear de pick-ninny complexion 'poil.

Patience. Hei! for you mouth too big! You really black, Iris; I not remark it before; I tink you was only bery dark brown.

Iris. Who dis you call black? * You fader black, you modda black, you huncle black, you haunt black, you broda black, you sista black—eberyting alongs to you black as the debbil.

The remainder of the conversation had better not be recorded.

Mr Spence, hurried on by strongly

* The definable mixtures of races were (perhaps still are), in Jamaica, classed as follows:—

White and black produced a Mulatto.

White and Mulatto produced a Quadroon.

White and Quadroon produced a Mustee.

White and Mustee produced a Mustafina, who was white by law, if not in fact.

A Mulatto and a black produced a Sambo, and, as one easily perceives, the proportions of white and black blood might be varied *ad infinitum*, and the differences between some of them would be so slight, that to distinguish them would be most difficult. Nevertheless, every addition of *white* blood, though to a European it might have seemed inappreciable, was greatly prized and boasted of by the possessor. Nature not seldom declined to put her sign to these additions, and the actual colour seemed to belie the genealogy. Thus a Quadroon would now and then be almost white, while a Mustee might be very dark indeed. Accordingly, a brown (*i.e.*, in Jamaica a *coloured*) person might lay claim to a lineage not warranted by complexion, or might be gifted with a complexion which the lineage would not justify. Here was a fertile source of wrangling, quarrels, and revilings! What proverbially we are said to do sometimes by the devil, a brown person was always ready to do by his fellow—that is, to make him blacker than nature had painted him.

roused feeling, which he mistook for the promptings of duty, and really sickened by so many sad scenes and events, took his passage for England; but when he had been a short time at sea, and his morbid feelings had somewhat worn off, he began to see that he really had but little reason to dare Clifton to mortal combat. The disappearance of the Ensign from Jamaica had at first certainly opened a way for the prosecution of Spence's suit; and if Arabella had survived, might have proved greatly to Spence's advantage. Spence had only jumped at the conclusion that Clifton had behaved ill; he had no proof of it. Upon the whole he thought he had better hear Clifton's story before he condemned him; and after this his thoughts became less and less bloodthirsty. He did, however, immediately on his landing, seek out Clifton, who by this time had exchanged into another regiment, and was by him so kindly and courteously received, that he at once blamed himself for entertaining doubt of Clifton's integrity; and the Ensign was so frank in all he had to say, and evinced such genuine sorrow at the heavy news which Spence brought him, that all thought of disagreement vanished. From Spence it was that Clifton learned particulars of what had happened in the island since his departure. Most anxiously did he inquire every particular of the sad events to which Spence could bear such ample testimony, and Spence told him all that was known concerning Arabella's illness, explaining that what took place at Higson's Gap had been partly communicated by Mammy Cis, and partly learned from the slaves about the place. Clifton heard all with an interest and an emotion of the most lively kind, seeming to have no thought

for any other subject. When Spence told of her death and the attendant circumstances, the Ensign was greatly overcome, and for a long time could not continue the conversation. When at last he did so, he asked in a faltering voice the exact date of the event; and on being informed, he exclaimed, "Good God! how wonderful!" Clifton then recounted to Spence the details of an extraordinary occurrence which had happened to him at this very date, which details he had recorded at the time. (The record is attached to the MS., but it will suffice here to give the heads.) It appears that Clifton was thinking over his Jamaica sorrows, and his mind was filled with thoughts of his still dear Arabella. Of a sudden he lost the consciousness of what was around him, and was, or fancied himself, in a tropical scene which was quite strange to him, but which he graphically described. There he saw his beloved girl pale and dripping with wet. She told him this would be their last meeting and fell senseless on his breast. He was in an agony of grief, and greatly perplexed as to what should be done. After a moment's thought he judged it necessary to lay her down on the ground and to seek assistance. When he moved he discovered that a tempest was raging of which until then his mind was too much occupied to take account. A tremendous peal of thunder shook the earth and deprived him of sense and motion. When his spirit came back to him he was in his apartment, as before, with the recollection of this vision so vivid that he was fain to write it down. It is remarkable that this record describes Broadrent Gully, which Clifton, in the flesh, had never seen.

Clifton had not much to tell Spence in return for his intelli-

gence; but one little noteworthy item he did communicate, and it supplemented strangely the fulfilment of the predictions announced by Mammy Cis. Lieutenant Dix had left the service suddenly, and, at the first, mysteriously. After he had disappeared it came out that a very fraudulent transaction had taken place, which might have led to worse consequences than Lieutenant Dix's retirement from his Majesty's service. The Berkeley Castle had, it seems, on the same voyage which has been described in this narrative, brought to Dix a letter, which gave him great delight. It was signed with the name of a London merchant of the highest character, and it authorised the lieutenant to use the said name as a means of obtaining money accommodations from Mr Henriquez at Montego Bay, who has been mentioned above. Henriquez at once cashed bills for Dix to a considerable amount. The latter had lost heavy sums at cards and on the race-course, and could not meet his engagements until this timely assistance became available. It was then supposed that remittances, which he had bragged that he could obtain from England, had arrived, and that his affairs were straight again. He had, before this, tired out the patience of his friends at home, and had his own reasons for expecting that his bills might be returned dishonoured. But he had fancied that, after his first strait was passed, he could infallibly make money enough to redeem the paper, if the worst should come; and the bills could not be back for a long time. He was disappointed—as is not infrequent with such clever youths. The bills came back at last; and what was worse, the London merchant on whose recommendation they had

been cashed, disclaimed all knowledge of the drawer. The truth was, as Dix confessed to Henriquez, that the letter was written by a nephew of the London merchant, a friend and schoolfellow of Dix, who bore the same name as his uncle. It was not, therefore, a forgery, but it was a fraud. Henriquez, after Dix opened his breast to him, very generously declined to take any proceedings, and said he would leave it to the honour of Dix's friends to make good the loss. But, unfortunately, the matter got wind; and Dix's colonel dropped heavily on him, and made him retire, to avoid a court-martial. And Henriquez got his money after a while.

Instead of mortal enemies, Clifton and Spence became fast friends. Spence wrote from England several times to Miss Salmon, who had been always a faithful ally of his. When he went back to Jamaica, he renewed his acquaintance with her, and began to perceive that he had never half appreciated her merits. Clifton received, with much pleasure, before he embarked for India, the news of their having become man and wife. At intervals of years he met them again and again, and to the end of his days kept up a correspondence with them. From them it was that he heard of Mr Chisholm's death, years after Arabella's, and of the estate passing to a distant relative; also that Mammy Cis was still alive, very little changed, and likely to live, as many of her countrywomen do, to the age of a hundred.

I must not omit to mention that the overseer of Higson's Gap did at last turn his charms to some account. He had left Mr Chisholm's service, and taken a place under another planter, equally rich, and maintaining very much the same sort of es-

tablishment. This new employer got very wet at a cock-fight, and had a long dispute about a bet, which prevented the change of his apparel until after he had got chilled. Two days after, he was in a raging fever, suspected that it was all over with him in this world, and felt very uncomfortable about the next. There was a handsome slave-girl in the house, who occupied very much the same position as Mammy Cis at Blenheim. This woman he manumitted formally, and then made a will, bequeathing to her all his large property, making our friend the busha an executor, and informing him of the dispositions which he had effected. That being settled, he desired the busha to read the Bible to him; and a mutilated copy of the Scriptures having been, after a search of some length, extracted from a lumber-room, the busha tranquillised the sick man's mind by the description of Solomon's temple. After this preparation, the planter sank and died. While they were laying him out, the busha, who was a Briton born, proposed to the heiress to take her to church

and marry her. She thought more of having a real buckra for a husband than of all the wealth that had become hers, and closed at once with the offer. In a week they were man and wife. The busha was a good deal baited at first about this connection; but he was a plucky fellow, and did not allow disparaging remarks about the step which he had taken. After he had shot one friend dead, and lamed another for life, society conceived rather a high respect for him and his wife. His name has not been mentioned here, because descendants of his are alive to this day. They remained wealthy as long as the island flourished, and have furnished councilors, judges, and colonels of militia for generations. All of them have fiery hair, curling very crisp, and the sun tans their skin a bright red.

The friendship of the Spences and Cliftons descended to the next generation; and as Clifton (*my* friend Clifton, I mean) often says, the memory of it won't die out as long as there's a bottle of this splendid Madeira forthcoming.

TWO LADIES.

THE present generation is much disposed to think that a great many ideas are of its invention, which are in reality as old as the hills, and as firmly rooted in human nature as are these ancient summits in the green earth. One of these, and a very prominent one, is that of the employment of women—a supposed novelty which has given to many busy persons in our age the delightful conviction of being themselves inventors, apostles, and missionaries of an altogether novel undertaking—one for which it was not unlikely they might be sent to the stake, if not of actual burning, at least of popular indignation and opposition. The critics of women—who are more or less the whole “male sect,” just as the female part of the community are the unsparing though less demonstrative critics of men—are fond of saying that heat and excitement are unfailing accompaniments of all female advocacy, whatsoever its objects may be; and perhaps there is something of this in the polemical, warlike, and indignant assertion of the right of women to toil, which has been of late days so strenuously put forth. We are not inclined to combat that assertion. For our own part, we are much disposed to believe that the greatest and most fundamental wrong done to women in this world is the small appreciation ever shown—at least in words—of the natural and inevitable share of the world’s work which they cannot avoid, and which no one can say they do not fulfil uncomplainingly. So long as the occupations of mother and house-keeper are taken for granted as of no particular importance, and the woman who discharges them is treated simply as one of her hus-

band’s dependants, her work bearing no comparison with that of the “bread-winner,” so long will all hot-headed and high-spirited women resent the situation. But this is not the question that we have here to discuss. We began by saying that the present generation considers itself to have invented the idea that women have a right to the toils and rewards of labour, notwithstanding the long array of facts staring them in the face from the beginning of history, by which it is apparent, that whenever it has been necessary, women *have* toiled, have earned money, have got their living and the living of those dependent upon them, in total indifference to all theory. The “widow-woman” with her “sma’ family”—and there is scarcely any one who is not acquainted with two or three specimens of this class—has not waited for any popular impulse, poor soul, to put her shoulder to the wheel, nor has stopped to consider whether the work she could get to do was feminine, so long as she could get it, and could get paid for it, and get bread for her children. In all classes of society the existence of need has been a key which has opened spheres of labour to women, and developed capabilities of work which have had nothing to do with any theory. And even on a much higher level than that which we have already indicated, those persons are few who do not number among their acquaintance some lady whom the necessities of existence have forced into active competition with other strugglers for bread. These workers, perhaps, may not have found their career so dignified as that, for example, of the young female conveyancer whom we lately heard of, whose chambers

in Lincoln's Inn are thronged by clients; but at all events they managed to keep their heads above water, and did their work, though with little blowing of trumpets. The two ladies* whose memorials lie before us—one the record of a life which is over, the other the recollections of a still vivacious and active intelligence, which we hope may yet derive a great deal of tranquil pleasure from the evening time of life—give admirable proof of what we have said. They were friends, and belonged to the same society more or less: they were in full tide of their lives, if not beginning to wane, when the agitations of recent times were but beginning; which did not hinder them, however, from stepping into the busy current of active life when necessity made it desirable so to do—finding work that suited them, and doing it, as well as if all England got up in church on Sunday and said, "I believe that women ought to be allowed to work" at all the trades in the world. Anna Jameson and Fanny Kemble were not, it may be said, ordinary women; they had each a special gift—but it was not the highest manifestation of that gift, that either possessed. Fanny Kemble was not worthy, she would herself be the first to admit, to loose the latchet of her aunt, the great Mrs Siddons, who preceded her in her trade; nor can Mrs Jameson be considered a person of that overmastering genius which holds its place by divine right. And neither the one nor the other had, so far as these books indicate, that strongest stimulus of a woman's exertion, a family of children to be brought up. Yet neither of them found any obstacles worth speaking of between them

and the professions which they respectively chose.

Much more interesting, however, than any argument which they can illustrate, are the chapters of life which they supply. The fact that they came across each other at various points of their life, and that each has something to say about the other, gives a double interest to the twin threads of story. Both were admirable and devoted daughters; both were unhappy wives: both had to fight their own way, through storms and troubles, from a beginning full of that bright happiness, hope, and visionary daring which somehow seem, nowadays, almost more conspicuous in young women of talent than in young men, to a life of achievement more moderate than their ideal, and of sorrow far beyond any prognostication. In other respects those two women were very different. Mrs Jameson was sentimental, and Miss Kemble gay; but indeed any attempt to compare them would be out of place, since the recollections of the latter are confined to the earlier part of her life, and cannot be judged as we can estimate the entire and perfect chrysolite of the other's completed career.

Mrs Jameson's memoir comes to us under sad circumstances. It had not been intended to publish any biography of her; and when at last her favourite niece, after an interval of many years, took it in hand, she was herself already overshadowed by the glooms of the valley of death, and died before the book was through the press. It is a modest, and in many respects graceful memoir, giving a very unaffected and agreeable picture of a woman whose character

* *Memoirs of the Life of Anna Jameson.* By her Niece, Gerardine Macpherson. London, Longmans & Co.

Records of a Girlhood. By Fanny Kemble. London, Richard Bentley & Son.

and its defects, whose style and studies, were all womanly; and of the society in which she lived, with some glimmering side-lights of foreign society, in which she shone, a faint yet luminous star—a representative of English culture and literary grace. Her travels are much less remarkable now than when she made them; her attainments were never, perhaps, very great, or her insight very profound; but her work in the world was very distinct and perfect in its way—true to all it professed, well considered, and full of the poise and balance which only leisure and reflection can give.

We do not find in her books any of the hurry and precipitation to which we are getting used in most literary productions. She says indeed, again and again, that nothing would induce her to bind herself to a certain time of publication, which she calls "putting herself in bondage to the booksellers." Alas! the bondage thus undertaken means, in many cases, a preliminary bondage to life, in comparison with which the hardest of taskmasters is liberal. Mrs Jameson had learned a lesson which her successors in literature find it more and more difficult to master. She had acquired the art of content with earnings that were never great, and of life within the strict limits of her capability. The man or woman who does this need never fear to be hurried into ignoble or imperfect work; but of all the arts within human reach it is perhaps, in this age, the most hard. The contrast between the modest existence and limited production of such a writer, and the perpetual overstrain of exertion and greater social independence of her successors in literature, is very marked. It indicates, perhaps, a change in national manners, as well as in those of individuals. The author in earlier days, was very

well content to be the attendant star of some noble or wealthy house, getting society and its privileges upon a footing which was not exactly that of inferiority, often indeed that of flattered elevation and nominal sovereignty—but never upon an equal footing; and even in the more recent past up to the borders of to-day, though individual patrons are less notable, society itself has assumed this protecting attitude. More or less, let us allow it, the artist's position has always been the same. He has been supposed to lend lustre, in the days of more magnificent patronage, to the Court or the great man who entertained him. He has been the ornament and pride of the society which never in its soul has considered him as more than its dependant; although, after all the little details of everyday intercourse were over, and the patron and the patronised both dead and turned to clay, his position has appeared, in the light of subsequent records, a very delightful and admirable one, and he himself the central light in the picture, of which he was in reality, could we but know, the merest little twinkling taper. Time sets all this to rights in the most astonishing way—changing every social arrangement, "putting down the mighty from their seats" in true Biblical fashion, though, perhaps, those who are "exalted" can scarcely be termed the "humble and meek." Sir Walter Scott, perhaps, was the first writer who set his face against this order of things. He wanted to establish a family, everybody says; to be a county magnate, and leave to his sons and grandsons after him (alas!) the inheritance of that magnificent position. Perhaps;—we say nothing against the universal verdict which has marked out this foolishness (if foolishness it was) in the mind of the most sensible of all men of genius. But, we

humblly opine, there was something more in it. Sir Walter was not a man to be patronised, though in the most flattering way. He was the first great writer who was determined to be socially independent, —to be the host and not the guest, to give and not to receive. Alas! one knows what came of it. We who have been bred upon Sir Walter are loath to allow that anything of his (short of 'Count Robert' or 'Castle Dangerous') is too much; and of all noble struggles on record, *his* struggle against debt and dishonour — with hasty taskwork of not always admirable but always honest work, for which it pleased the public (God bless it for the memory of that wise and gracious folly!) to pay absurd prices—is one of the most noble. Still it was a grievous and a painful price to pay for the position not only of Scotch laird (we are disposed to think a secondary aspiration), but of host and entertainer of the whole world at Abbotsford—genial prince of letters, not the "ornament" of anybody else's society, were it a king, but head of his own. The fashion thus set has had results which Sir Walter did not contemplate. Society, finding that way decidedly cheaper, has recognised the revolt against patronage by giving it up to a great degree; and, alas! in a great many cases the artist, not giving up society, but in the heyday of success feeling himself rich enough in his pen or pencil to cock his beaver with any man, has set up for equality, as Sir Walter did, and in something of the same way—hence how many floods of hurrying books one on the heels of another! how many brilliant splashes of raw pictures, hard transcripts of nature that mean nothing but so many hundreds or thousands of pounds! This is the drawback of that social independence which means a more expensive life than we can afford. Would it be better

to go back (if we could) to the position of "ornaments of society," acknowledging ourselves the legitimate amusers of our betters, and nothing more? There is something that would perhaps be still more expedient than this; which is to do without our betters, to give up all hankerings after them, and try "the little oatmeal" which has proved such excellent fare—the "high thinking and poor living" which is so good for art. If we always could when we would!

This is once more a digression: but it indicates, we think, a marked difference in the life of our own days, when literature is becoming, or has become, a profession like any other; and those who follow it, and who are known to be able to earn a very good substantial income by it, are no longer supposed to require the petting and admiring pity of the world as persons whose very gifts imply a certain folly and want of practical qualities. This tradition still lingered, when Mrs Jamieson rose into popularity as the author of a pretty, languishing little book of travel, in which, beside a good deal of sentimental self-bemoaning, there were some charming descriptions of places little enough known to excite the eager reader whose imagination was then apt to take fire at the very name of Italy, and some indications of a budding comprehension of art. The pretty young woman who gained this entirely lady-like triumph had just been married, and was now no melancholy *ennuyée* at all, though she had known troubles even at that early stage. She was not a girlish bride, being about thirty at the time of her marriage; but there is nothing in that age to prevent her from being a pretty young woman, golden-haired and fair, with beautiful hands and arms, and a lovely complexion, as one of her contemporaries—the lady

whose name we have linked with hers, Fanny Kemble—describes her. Before she came to this stage, however, there had been a good deal of change and variety, and some touch of hardship, in her life. Her father, whose name was Murphy, an Irish miniature-painter of very considerable ability, as some of his miniatures still existing amply testify, had probably some difficulty, as is unfortunately common enough in artists' households, in making both ends meet; and his eldest child, the eldest of a little party of five sisters—just the kind of family which is most delightful in babyhood, and most alarming when the question of providing for them comes to be considered—very soon seems to have been seized by the prophetic conviction that she was to take this burden upon her with as little delay as possible. Nothing can be prettier than the picture of the five little maidens, four of them in awed and unquestioning subjection to their sister, who followed their parents in their wanderings about the north of England, and final settlement in London. The others were, it is likely, as little impressed by any struggles of poverty in the house as children generally are; but little Anna understood and foresaw that it was her business to remedy that domestic trouble. When she was about twelve, she conceived for this purpose a notable plan. She gathered her little sisters together, probably after some unrecorded family incident which had made the situation clear to her, and harangued them. Here were four of them from twelve downwards (the fifth being still in the cradle), eating the bread of idleness, she said, while their father and mother were struggling. Her plan was—that they should immediately “set out for Brussels, learn the art of lace-making, work at it at once successfully, and achieve in

the shortest possible time a fortune with which to set their parents at ease for the future. The proceeding was *tout simple*. . . . The plan would be, to take their course straight along by the banks of the Paddington Canal as far as it went, then inquire which was the nearest road to the coast, and then take ship for Belgium.” This heroic scheme did not come to anything, through the weakness of one of the little conspirators. But it is as pretty a story of childish heroism and foolishness, delightfully true and touching in both, as we ever remember to have heard. The high-spirited child is an ideal little heroine.

This and a few other charming anecdotes are derived from the recollections of the one surviving sister, a lady who has, we believe, attained the venerable age of eighty, with intelligence as bright and heart as warm as ever. “Camilla remembers still how Anna, with her head erect and her blue eyes gleaming, would declaim the well-known verses—

‘Thy spirit, Independence, let me share,
Lord of the lion heart and eagle eye;
Thy steps I’ll follow with my bosom
bare,
Nor heed the storm that howls along
the sky’—

till the other feeble voices of the nursery party had learned to lisp them after her, a little awed, and wondering at their own heroism.” And when time had somewhat matured the young saviour of the family—but not much, for she was only sixteen—Anna went out into the world as a governess, which perhaps was harder than the lace-making. The chief thing that interests us in her ‘Diary of the Ennuyée,’ is just the side glimpse afforded, quite unwittingly, of this governess life—the unconscious revelation of her own partial solitude in the midst of a gay party, which

she puts down to the score of the mysterious sorrow in which it is her pleasure to shroud herself, the mild feminine Byronism of a heart-broken wanderer. No doubt it was, as her biographer suggests, a fashion of the time.

The little book which first brought her into notice was not written to be printed at all. It was made up of the contents of a journal which it was her practice to keep, and which she kept all her life, though the later volumes were destroyed. A governess of some genius on the grand tour with her pupils and their family, who were of no genius at all—a young woman who had quarrelled with her lover and broken off her engagement, and had a turn for writing,—what more easy than to understand what sort of a book it was? Few people nowadays know much of the ‘*Diary of an Ennuyée* ;’ but the elders among us, and especially ladies who were young about that time, or indeed twenty years after that time, will certainly have fallen in with the elegant little volume, so pretty and spirited, so melancholy and languishing,—the very ideal book which the heroine in white satin or the confidante in white muslin might have—granted the gift of composition—been expected to write. We advise the reader, if he finds it on some dusty book-shelf, to make acquaintance with that melancholy young lady. He will not cry probably, as his contemporaries did, but he will often smile, and he will like her, notwithstanding her sincere affectation. She has the courage to venture some very rash judgments upon pictures which made her own hair stand on end in after and more enlightened days ; and she affords us glimpses, unintentional, of her own position, which are touching without any intention of being so. The journal was brought out by a sort of quack

publisher and Jack-of-all-trades, after she had recovered from her dejection, and had, unhappily for her, made it up with her lover ; and she got a guitar with the price—which, no doubt, it was by no means disagreeable to her to play with her beautiful hands. Miss Martineau gives an ill-natured line, in her general abuse of all her acquaintance, to a lady thinly protected by an initial, Mrs J——, who lets her hand hang over the back of a chair by way of showing its beauty. And why not? A pretty hand is not a possession to be hid.

Mrs Jameson’s marriage was entirely unsuccessful and unhappy. The story of it, as given here, is perhaps inadequate, and scarcely accounts for the superficial and brief union, the ever-widening breach, between these two unsuitable people. Evidently not half is told, or would bear telling, though the writer is anxious to assure the public that no wrong of a serious kind, no greater blame on one side or the other than that of absolute incompatibility, existed between the unfortunate pair. There is an account of an incident which happened in the first week of their marriage, however, which throws some light upon the character of the husband, who is *not* the subject of the memoir, and for whom there is not even a devil’s advocate to plead, though Mrs Macpherson has been scrupulous in throwing no unnecessary mud upon him :—

“The pair had been married in the middle of the week—Wednesday, my informant believes—and settled at once in their lodgings. On the Sunday Mr Jameson announced his intention of going out to the house of some friends, with whom he had been in the habit of spending Sunday before his marriage. The young wife was struck dumb by this proposal. ‘But,’ she said, ‘they do not know me ; they may not want to know me. Would it not be better to wait until they have time at least

to show whether they care for my acquaintance?' 'That is as you please,' said the husband; 'but in any case, whether you come or not, I shall go.' The bride of three or four days had to make up her mind. How could she intrude herself upon strangers? But supposing, on the other hand, any friend of her own should come, any member of her family, to congratulate her on her happiness, how could her pride bear to be found alone and forsaken on the first Sunday of her married life? Accordingly, with an effort she prepared herself, and set out with him in her white gown—*forlorn enough*, who can doubt? They had not gone far when it began to rain; and taking advantage of this same white gown as a pretext for escaping from so embarrassing a visit, she declared it impossible to go further. 'Very well,' once more said the bridegroom. 'You have an umbrella. Go back, by all means; but I shall go on.' And so he did; and though received, as his astonished host afterwards related, with exclamations of bewilderment and consternation, carelessly ate his dinner with them, and spent the rest of the evening until his usual hour with perfect equanimity and unconcern."

This curious story is as much as we need give of the record of Mrs Jameson's matrimonial troubles. Fortunately circumstances as well as inclination kept the pair much apart; and when, after a cheerless visit paid by the wife to the husband in Canada, and dreary attempt to renew their relations on a better footing, which it is to be supposed both made conscientiously, yet which failed completely, they parted, he declaring that in leaving him she carried with her his "most perfect respect and esteem." "My affection you will never cease to retain," he adds. The wife, on her side, makes no response to these pretty sayings, and never seems to have assured him of respect and esteem on her part. His letters are very neat, and nicely expressed; while in hers there is always a suppressed tone of aggrieved indigna-

tion. Oddly enough, her friends say that as much love as there was between this strange couple was on the woman's side. However, they parted with these fine expressions of confidence twelve years after their marriage, and saw each other no more.

Mrs Jameson returned after this painful expedition to her own family, of which, henceforward, she became the chief stay. Her husband gave her an allowance of £300 a-year; but very soon her father's life was threatened by paralysis, and though he lived for many years longer, he was never able for work again. The sisters, once making so pretty a group in their adoring submission to their elder sister, were now, like herself, growing into middle age. Two of them married, not in such a way as to be of much use to their relations; and the two unmarried, along with the father and mother, fell upon Anna's hands. She was, as we have said, a writer more elegant than vigorous, a workwoman fastidious about her work, and entirely incapable of the precipitation of modern toil; but nevertheless she took up this burden without a murmur, and patiently eked out her income with a great deal of industry, much grace and limpid purity of style, and a subdued sense of the hardship of her position, which never for one moment made her falter in the doing of this affectionate duty. She produced another pretty book, in which there lingers much of the melancholy and more or less sentimental charm of the '*Ennuyée*'—a book about the Women of Shakespeare, in which there is not indeed much profound criticism, but a great deal of charming writing. The "*elegant female*" is never quite absent from our mind when we glance over those graceful discussions; yet we cannot help wondering whether the girls

who read them were not far more likely to become refined and cultivated women, than those who are brought up upon George Sand and De Musset, or those who, like some intelligent specimens we have lately met with, pursue the "higher education of women" through all manner of lecturings, without knowing who Portia is, or that Beatrice who could have eaten the heart in the market-place of the man who had scorned her friend. Elegant and a little artificial as they may be, these gentle disquisitions upon the highest and noblest of poetical creations, always pure, generous, and lofty in their tone, are better things by far than much that has supplanted them. It was still "chiefly for my own sex" that Mrs Jameson proposed to write; and we think, for our own part,—notwithstanding that "the female figure seated dejectedly beneath a tall lily-bush" watching "the tiny bark vanishing into a stormy distance" which forms its frontispiece, is, in its conventional elegance and feeble drawing, not uncharacteristic of the literary matter it prefaces,—that there is a healthier soul in its enthusiasm, and a far higher aim, than we are apt to meet with nowadays. This pretty book is, we believe, out of print: it deserves reinvestiture in that apparel better than many productions of much greater importance. "The female figure under the lily" was a pretty compliment to the young friend, Fanny Kemble, to whom the book was dedicated, and who was then disappearing into a very stormy distance indeed—over the misty Atlantic, seeking fortune for her family and herself, as Anna Jameson, with less *éclat* and much less profit, was seeking a living for her dependants at home.

The story of the struggling and laborious life in which she did this is often very pathetic: it had its times of depression, its gleams of

better hope. Sometimes, in her letters, she complains of the want of companionship to which her life is doomed; sometimes, with tender bravery, declares herself to have "love and work enough" to keep her spirit strong. Her family, more or less, were always dependent on her; and as if she had not enough to do with the father and mother and sisters, who were none of them over-prosperous, the childless woman took upon her the training and charge of one of the two children who were the sole representatives of the family in the second generation—the little Gerardine, about whom all her correspondents speak as of the dearest interest in her life. Very pretty is the picture she herself gives of this vicarious motherhood:—

"I wish you could see the riot they make on my bed in the morning," she writes, "when Gerardine talks of Richard the First—the hero of her infantine fancy—whose very name makes her blush with emotion; and little Dolly Dumpling (by baptism and the grace of God *Cumilla Ottillie*) insists upon reciting 'Little Jack Horner,' who is *her* hero. They are my comfort and delight."

Yet there were many times when she felt bitterly enough those privations of the heart which all must feel who have no one in the world absolutely and by right their own.

"In the whole wide world I have no companion," she says, in a very interesting and touching letter. "All that I do, think, feel, plan, or endure, it is alone. . . . You think I am not religious enough. I fear you are right; for if I were, God would be to me all I want, replace all I regret thus selfishly and weakly, and more, if to believe and trust implicitly in the goodness of God were enough: but apparently it is not; and my resignation is that which I suppose a culprit feels when irrevocable sentence of death is pronounced—a submission to bitter necessity, which he tries to render dignified in appearance, that those

who love him may not be pained or shamed."

Such were the differing moods of her refined and sensitive nature. "Do not think that I voluntarily throw up the game of life," she adds. And it is very clear that she never was permitted to do so, though now and then a fit of impatience and weariness would seize her, and she would rush away from the little coterie at home to the freer air at a distance, where her cares might be forgotten for a moment, and the daily evidences of them be lost sight of. The heart-sickness of that perpetual uphill struggle against difficulty, and the strain of keeping, not her own head only, but so many other heads above water, can be read between the lines rather than in full revelation—her very biographer being, as she herself says, "too near" the subject of her sketch to get her in just perspective, and too much imbued with the natural family feeling of property in the breadwinner to feel the full meaning of the very phrases she quotes.

Mrs Jameson, however, was far from being lonely, according to the superficial meaning of the word. She exclaims in playful impatience that it would be almost as good to have a friend in heaven as in America! yet she had many very warm friends in different parts of the globe, and had at all times of her life a genius for friendship. For the long space of about twenty years her connection with Lady Byron was so close as to be half resented by many other friends, who found her separated from them by the "absorbing" and "engrossing" effect of this master-friendship. And there is a curious glimpse afforded us of this strange woman—a glimpse which certainly does not throw any light more warm or kindly upon the self-contained being, who seems to have had the

faculty of drawing her friends into her orbit without ever for a moment deflecting from its rigid course by any movement of sympathy or self-abandonment on her own part. Mrs Jameson was one of those who were swallowed up in the absorbing and stifling atmosphere of personal influence which surrounded her: until the moment came when the humbler friend disturbed in some mysterious way the self-satisfaction of the greater, when she was suddenly cast forth into outer darkness—tossed to the outside earth like a fallen meteor, and excluded from all the doubtful advantages of the connection which had stifled her intercourse with less exacting associates. Mrs Macpherson is disposed to be mysterious about this breach, and speaks of it with bated breath—with a sense of the tremendous importance of it to her aunt, which the reader will be disposed to smile at; but it is evident that even the rebellious youthful member of the society overshadowed by Lady Byron's presence could not calmly contemplate the penalty of being torn from her side, or look upon that severance in the light of ordinary good sense. "Mrs Jameson had become, partially by accident, acquainted with some private particulars affecting a member of Lady Byron's family which had not been revealed to Lady Byron herself," the biographer says, with studied reticence. "When these facts were finally made known at the death of the person chiefly concerned, Lady Byron became aware at the same time of Mrs Jameson's previous acquaintance with them;" and the result was a breach which, she believes, shortened her aunt's life, and, according to her own complaint, "broke her heart." Fatal woman, whom even to be friends with was dangerous! will the world, we wonder, ever get a real glimpse under the veil so

studiously draped round this mysterious personage? If they do—which is certainly not desirable—it seems more than likely that the unveiling would reveal, as in so many other cases, but a sorry idol underneath; but there is a certain picturesqueness in the figure in shadow, of which we cannot discover anything more than an outline. This, however, seems to have been the only quarrel which disturbed Mrs Jameson's many friendships, and it was a cruel blow to her.

In 1849 she went to Italy, taking with her the child to whom there have been so many references; and there is nothing more interesting in this very touching volume than the half-remorseful, modest, and tender description of the (one is tempted to think) far more real disappointment and heartbreak innocently occasioned by herself to the adopted mother whose warmest tie to life she was—which is given by Mrs Jameson's affectionate biographer after life and experience had opened her eyes, and showed to her the breaking up of hopes and plans which her own girlish romance had caused. Upon this particular expedition Mrs Jameson set out with more pleasure than usual, and with a much more extended plan,—the companionship of the bright, sweet, intelligent, seventeen-year-old girl making everything brighter and sweeter to the woman who had hungered for something that should be her very own. "My first thought and care must be my child for the next year, or perhaps two years," she writes, with all the happy importance of a mother, proud to make the most of the anxiety which is her happiness; "the means of instruction and improvement for her are what I seek first everywhere;" and that "the masters are good" becomes another attraction to Florence, in

itself always so attractive to a traveller of her special tastes and studies. Her letters from Rome, when she gets there, are full of the same pleasant reference. "Gerardine officiates very prettily" at the tea-table when her aunt's friends drop in of an evening; but must not go out too often, "for the little head cannot stand it." Even her own chosen friends take a new aspect to her as seen in their relations to this cherished child. "Dear Mrs Reid" takes Gerardine out occasionally: Madame von Goethe gives her "a beautiful scarf." A new and sweet completeness is thus given to the elder woman's life, and old Rome brightens to her in the light of the young eyes seeing them for the first time, and enjoying everything they see with all the enthusiasm of youth. But "in the very moment when Providence seemed to have given to Mrs Jameson a child who might cherish and comfort her for years, and make up to her a little for the adversities of fate—at the time when she began to get a little real pleasure and aid from the girl to whom she had been a second mother all her life—another great disappointment was already preparing for her."

"I cannot but feel with a remorseful pang," Mrs Macpherson continues, "how bitter it must have been to her to see the child she had so cherished desert her so summarily. It is the course of nature, as people say; and it is only by the teaching of years that we perceive how hardly the loves and joys of our youth often fall upon those from whom the tide of our own personal life and story carries us away. Mrs Jameson, of course, no more than any other in her position, would willingly have kept her niece unmarried, in order to make of her a permanent companion; but the speedy conclusion of this companionship startled her, and I fear must be reckoned among the disappointments of her life."

The second modest personality thus twined into the story adds the interest of a delicately-suggested undercurrent of life to the chief subject—a tragic one, of which we find the ending recorded within the same modest volume, which tells all that is to be told of the living and dying of Anna Jameson; and after this introduction of the pretty young figure of the chronicler, we think the reader will scarcely be able to glance at the few pages of the postscript in which the rest of her story is summed up, without a pang of sympathy and pity. There we find how hard was the last chapter of Gerardine's existence, after many years of not unprosperous nor unhappy, yet far from tranquil or easy, married life, which followed her union with Robert Macpherson, once a very well-known figure in Rome. (Peace be with him where he lies among the crowd at San Lorenzo—his jests and follies, his quarrels and kindnesses, all over—the song gone from his lips, and the twinkle from his eye; the kind, hot-headed, vapouring, noisy, tender-hearted Highlandman, friendliest and quarrelsome of men!) He died in 1873, leaving her penniless and overwhelmed with debt, and barely recovered from a severe illness, to struggle for herself and her children as she best might.

"She dragged herself up out of her suffering with aching limbs, and heart in which the seeds of disease were already sown, and faced her evil fortune with the courage of a hero. Whatever could be got to do she undertook—brave, ready, cheerful, unhesitating; now giving lessons or readings in English, now working as an amanuensis, now compiling paragraphs for the newspapers—no matter what it was; nor ever grudging the service of the night to a sick friend or neighbour after she had toiled from one scantily-paid, precarious occupation to another all the day. In the hot summer,

when everybody who could escape the dangerous city was out of Rome, she took, on more than one occasion, the post of the correspondent of an English newspaper who could afford to find a substitute for the deadly season, too glad to have her children's living secured even for so long. Thus she laboured on, though always subject to excruciating attacks of rheumatism, and to the still more alarming paroxysms of gradually increasing heart-disease, winding herself up for her year's work by a visit, when she could manage it, to the sulphur-baths of Stigliano, a wild and primitive place not far from Rome; now and then nearly dying, but always struggling up and to work again,—always bright, even gay—never less than a delightful, vivacious companion, an accomplished and cultivated woman, through all her toils."

Thus the author of the book we have been discussing has her memorial along with the subject of her biography. The little volume contains both their lives: in their death they are not divided. Mrs Jameson knew no such passion of toil and suffering as her niece passed through. Her later years were spent in dignified and becoming labour—spoilt by no hurry, made painful by no over-strain; a happiness which was made possible to her by the kindness of friends, and specially by the zeal of Mrs Proctor, a name so well known in literature, in wit, and in friendship. Mrs Jameson was able to continue her noble service to her family to the very end of her life, and her merits secured for her sisters a pension when she died. The volumes of 'Sacred and Legendary Art' have not lost their value or their popularity, notwithstanding the much more pretentious exponents of the subject who have risen since her time. If her taste does not conform to the latest canons of art-criticism, or if the fashion of the *cognoscenti* has changed since then, and Raphael given place to Botti-

celli among the highest authorities, that does not affect the beauty of her narratives, or the value of the delightful knowledge of which she has been one of the most popular and attractive of teachers. We know few more charming books than the *Legends of the Madonna* and the *Saints*, with the delicate illustrations, which, though perhaps they too show now and then a little feebleness of line, yet are full of grace and sweetness. In some corners of the etchings may be seen a tiny G. here and there, which stands for the young helper, the child, the shadow, the biographer, whose name is now joined to hers in this last and doubly close union for ever—for as long a “for ever” as their modest merits may win them from a forgetful world.

Mrs Fanny Kemble comes before us in her own person, with the kindly salutation of an old friend, and that pleasant confidence in the interest of her readers which, when there is anything to justify it, is always so ingratiating. In this case there is a great deal to justify it. Not only the position of an old favourite of the public, always received with pleasure, and the representative of a family dear to the arts, and accustomed to be much in the eye of the world; but her own talent, bright intelligence, and vivacious power, have made the familiar title of Fanny Kemble—a name somewhat too familiar when the possessor stands upon the boundaries of old age—pleasant to thousands: and it is delightful to read an autobiography which, though containing plenty of difficulty and trouble, is yet concerned with the brighter part of life, and has no doleful postscript to wind up its pleasant revelations. The book is well named. It is in reality what it professes to be—the *Records of a Girlhood*—and embraces the training,

antecedents, and brilliant beginning of professional life, which made its writer so well known in England—but little more. There is therefore but little dramatic interest in it. It is a fragmentary bit of life—the story of youth with its romance discreetly deleted, and no place left in the chronicle for those episodes which at twenty tell for so much in existence. But the reader need not fear that with this sparkling and lively companion he is likely to tire of the unromantic pathway by which she leads him. Youth can never be without romance; there is variety, hope, and infinite suggestiveness in every curve of the pleasant way, at the turn of which no one can ever tell what wonderful new landscape, what delightful prospect, may not open upon the traveller. And a more charming young woman it has rarely been our lot to meet than the young lady who tells all about her schools and her comrades, her pleasant home, her tender upbringing, and all the early chances of her life, with so much sincerity and openness. The same society in which we found ourselves with Mrs Jameson is to be met again in these pleasant pages, but with differences. Instead of the stern benevolence of Lady Byron, we have the bright young household of Lord Francis Egerton, who was also a dabbler in ink and a lover of the artistic classes; and fine society in general is treated from a lighter point of view, and with less perhaps of the proper awe which we all owe to that elevated portion of the world. Miss Fanny was saucy, as her high popularity warranted, and could deal with her patrons on more equal ground than was possible to the woman of letters. And it is curious to see how these two ladies appear in each other's recollections under a somewhat different light from that in which they are presented to us in their own. Mrs

Jameson's opinion of Fanny Kemble was very exalted. She consulted her about her Shakespeare book, dedicated it to her, and comments on her genius in terms which seem somewhat exaggerated at this distance—speaking of her “almost unequalled gifts,” and the trials that must await such a spirit; and describing one of her plays, as regretting greatly to have heard only a part of it, which “was beautiful, and affected me very powerfully.” Mrs Kemble does not give the same superlative picture of her elder friend. She has a somewhat careworn air as she appears and disappears in the young actress's lively records. “What a burden she has to carry! I am so sorry for her,” the girl says, who is still free of personal care notwithstanding the family troubles, in which she takes a sympathetic part. “Mrs Jameson came and sat with me some time,” she says. “We talked of marriage, and a woman's chance of happiness in giving her life into another's keeping. I said I thought if one did not expect too much one might secure a reasonably fair amount of happiness, though of course the risk one ran was immense. I never shall forget the expression of her face; it was momentary, and passed away almost immediately, but it has haunted me ever since.” Thus the one shadow flits across the other, in that past which is now no more than a tale that is told.

Fanny Kemble was the niece of the great Mrs Siddons and of John Kemble, and the daughter of Charles Kemble, who was also an accomplished actor in his day. Her mother was of French origin, and according to the accounts of her given in this book, was a woman of singularly beautiful character and great acquirements, especially distinguished by admirable theatrical taste and judgment. She had her-

self been on the stage in her youth, but had left it shortly after her marriage, and distinguished herself by as great a gift for household management, and the most exquisite cookery. Fanny was her eldest daughter and second surviving child, and in her youth a little pickle of the most unmanageable description, out of whom no satisfaction, not even that of making her suffer by the punishments that were inflicted upon her, could be had, the monkey being too proud or too light-hearted to care. Her account of her schools and her experiences is both pretty and amusing, and still more charming is the picture she presents of the player-folk among whom she was born and bred. So far as is to be seen from this memoir, no house in England could have possessed a more refined atmosphere, or habits more entirely worthy, pure, and honest. The fictitious excitement in which actors are supposed to live, seems to have had no existence among them; the only jar is the frequent and alarmed reference to the greatest personage of the kindred, the stately Mrs Siddons, whose old age Fannyspeaks of with a certain horror. “What a price she has paid for her great celebrity!” she cries; “weariness, vacuity, and utter deadness of spirit. The cup has been so highly flavoured, that life is absolutely without savour or sweetness to her now—nothing but tasteless insipidity. She has stood on a pinnacle till all things have come to look flat and dreary, mere shapeless, colourless monotony, to her.” This note of alarm is the only one that breaks into the delightful and respectable home-life amid which the girl grew up, shivering a little at sight of the Tragic Muse, so changed and fallen, but with nothing around herself but the protection and security of a refined and careful English home. Her father

had Covent Garden on his shoulders, the costly undertaking which had broken the heart and spirit of other members of his family, and which brought to him something very like ruin; but kept his head high against difficulty and discouragement, though daily fearing the crash which, staved off by one expedient after another, and most of all by his daughter's appearance on the stage and great success there, had to come at last. But there seems to have been nothing huggemugger or disorderly in the actor's house, though this shadow was for ever hanging over it, the income small and the needs many. Mrs Kemble says that her father's income was but eight hundred a-year, of which her eldest brother's expenses at the university took away about three hundred—a proof of his anxiety to equip his son in the best way for the struggle of life, which is very impressive and noble. Almost, of course, this expensively trained son carried out none of the hopes set upon his head, but followed a *spécialité* of his own choosing, and *en tout bien et tout honneur*, gave his family more anxiety than aid. But the sacrifice thus made shows how little the conventional idea of the harum-scarum existence of the stage, with all its excitements and supposed irregularity, is to be credited. No family could be more actors than the Kembles, and the mother of the household had been on the stage from her childhood, brought up amid all its unwholesome commotions; but from the other side of the picture we see nothing but the most highly toned family life, and that heroic struggle to raise their children a step above their own precarious level of existence, and give them the means of advancement, which always enlists the spectator's best feelings and sympathies.

The most interesting portion of these recollections is that which describes the way in which Fanny stepped into the breach, and did her best to prop up the big theatre and the family fortune on her own delicate girlish shoulders—a heroic act, though one that did little more than postpone the evil day. She was nineteen when the crisis which had been long approaching seemed at last to have become inevitable. "My mother, coming in from walking one day," she tells us, "threw herself into a chair and burst into tears. . . . 'Oh, it has come at last!' she answered; 'our property is to be sold. I have seen that fine building all covered with placards and bills of sale. The theatre must be closed, and I know not how many poor people will be turned adrift without employment.'" This bad news filled the anxious and sympathetic girl with distress. She begged to be allowed to write to her father, to ask his permission to "seek employment as a governess, so as to relieve him, at once, at least of the burden of my maintenance." To this forlorn plan—the natural first idea of a generous girl longing to help somehow, and snatching at the first melancholy helpless way of doing so that presented itself to her mind—the mother gave an ambiguous answer; but next day suddenly spoke of the stage, and suggested that Fanny should study a part out of Shakespeare, and recite it to her. The girl chose Portia—a character of which she speaks with unfailing enthusiasm; but on her recitation of this her mother made little comment. She said, "There is hardly passion enough in this part to test any tragic power. I wish you would study Juliet for me." When Mr Kemble, who had been absent, returned, the little performance was repeated, "with indescribable trepidation" on the part of the novice.

"They neither of them said anything beyond 'Very well, very nice, my dear,' with many kisses and caresses, from which I escaped to sit down on the stairs half-way between the drawing-room and my bedroom, and get rid of the repressed nervous fear I had struggled with while reciting, in floods of tears. A few days after this my father told me he wished to take me to the theatre with him, to try whether my voice was of sufficient strength to fill the building; so thither I went. That strange-looking place the stage, with its rocks of pasteboard and canvas, streets, forests, banqueting-halls, and dungeons, drawn apart on either side, was empty and silent; not a soul was stirring in the indistinct recesses of its mysterious depths, which seemed to stretch indefinitely behind me. In front the grey amphitheatre, equally empty and silent, wrapped in its grey Holland covers, would have been absolutely dark but for a long, sharp, thin shaft of light that darted here and there from some height and distance far above me, and alighted in a sudden vivid spot of brightness on the stage. Set down in the midst of twilight space, as it were, with only my father's voice coming to me from where he stood, hardly distinguishable in the gloom, in those poetical utterances of pathetic passion, I was seized by the spirit of the thing; my voice resounded through the great vault above and before me, and, completely carried away by the inspiration of the wonderful play, I acted Juliet as I do not believe I ever acted it again, for I had no visible Romeo, and no audience to thwart my imagination—at least I had no consciousness of one, though in truth I had one. In the back of one of the private boxes, commanding the stage, but perfectly invisible to me, sat an old and warmly-attached friend of my father's, Major D,— . . . the best judge, in many respects, that my father could have selected of my capacity for my profession, and my chance of succeeding in it. Not till after the event had justified my kind old friend's prophecy did I know that he had witnessed that morning's performance, and joining my father at the end of it had said, 'Bring her out at once; it will be a great success.' And so three weeks from that time I was

brought out, and it was a great success."

Thus Fanny Kemble's fate was decided. Girls are often enough helpless in a domestic catastrophe; but that there are frequent occasions in which the loyal and dutiful daughter is the mainstay and saviour of the falling house, is not a fact that requires proof from us. Among the artist-classes it is more general than in any other—simply, we suppose, because it is art alone which (more or less) equalises the value of labour without respect of sex or circumstance. Miss Kemble had no enthusiasm for the work she thus undertook. On the contrary, she seems to have disliked and disapproved of it throughout her career. "At four different periods of my life," she says, "I have been constrained by circumstances to maintain myself by the exercise of my dramatic faculty; . . . but though I have never, I trust, been ungrateful for the power of thus helping myself and others, . . . though I have never lost one iota of intense delight in the art of rendering Shakespeare's creations; yet neither have I ever presented myself before an audience without a shrinking feeling of reluctance, or withdrawn from their presence without thinking the excitement I had undergone unhealthy, and the exhibition odious." Elsewhere she speaks of her trade as "an avocation which I never either liked or honoured." Macready entered upon the profession in the same way, but at a still earlier age, and in a manner more matter of fact.

The moment the decision was made, every arrangement was hurried on to "bring her out at once," as necessity and policy both seemed to require. She had everything to learn; and, according to her own account, learned not very much. "I do not wonder," Mrs Kemble

says, "when I remember this brief apprenticeship to my profession, that Mr Macready once said that I did not know the elements of it." But though she does not wonder at this severe verdict, it is evident that she felt it painfully, since she returns again and again to the sentence thus passed upon her. Her own description of her system of acting shows exactly how Mr Macready, who was nothing if not professional, and whose art was learned and elaborate, should have given forth such an opinion. She tells us that her acting varied, so that probably no two renderings were exactly the same. "My performances," she writes, "were always uneven in themselves, and perfectly unequal with each other; never complete as a whole, however striking in occasional parts, and never at the same level two nights together,—depending for their effect upon the state of my health and spirits, instead of being the result of deliberate thought and consideration—study, in short, carefully and conscientiously applied to my work." The result was, that all her higher successes were gained, not by calculation, but by the sudden access of excitement or feeling which made her one with the character she represented, filling her with the divine intoxication of poetry—an influence not to be secured at will. This impulsive kind of acting would be likely, we should imagine, to have, in its moments of power, a greater effect than any other; but though magnificent, it is not Art. In the meantime, however, she has not yet made her *début*, the story of which is very pretty too.

"My mother, who had left the stage for upwards of twenty years, determined to return to it on the night of my first appearance, and that I might have the comfort and support of her presence in my trial. We drove to the

theatre very early indeed, while the late autumn sunlight yet lingered in the sky. It shone into the carriage upon me; and as I screened my eyes from it my mother said, 'Heaven smiles on you, my child!' My poor mother went to her dressing-room to get herself ready, and did not return to me, for fear of increasing my agitation by her own. My dear aunt Dall and my maid and the theatre dresser performed my toilet for me, and at length I was placed in a chair with my satin train laid carefully over the back of it; and there I sat ready for execution, with the palms of my hands pressed convulsively together, and the tears I in vain endeavoured to repress welling up into my eyes and brimming slowly over down my rouged cheeks; upon which my aunt, with a smile full of pity, renewed the colour as often as those heavy drops made unsightly streaks in it. Once and again my father came to the door, and I heard his anxious 'How is she?'—to which my aunt answered, sending him away with words of comforting cheer. At last, 'Miss Kemble called for the stage, ma'am,' accompanied by a brisk tap at the door, started me upright on my feet, and I was led round to the side-scene opposite to the one from which I saw my mother advance on the stage; and while the uproar of her reception filled me with terror, dear old Mrs Davenport, my Nurse, and dear old Mr Keeley, her Peter, and half the *dramatis personæ* of the play (but not my father, who had retreated, quite unable to endure the scene) stood round me as I lay all but insensible in my aunt's arms. 'Courage, courage, dear child! Poor thing, poor thing!' reiterated Mrs Davenport. 'Never mind 'em, Miss Kemble,' urged Keeley, in that irresistibly comical, nervous, lachrymose voice of his, which I have never since heard without a thrill of anything but comical associations. 'Never mind 'em! don't think of 'em any more than if they were so many rows of cabbages.' 'Nurse!' called my mother, and on waddled Mrs Davenport, and turning back, called in her turn 'Juliet!' My aunt gave me an impulse forward, and I ran straight across the stage, stunned with the tremendous shout that greeted me; my

eyes covered with mist, and the green baize flooring of the stage feeling as if it rose up against my feet: but I got hold of my mother, and stood like a terrified creature at bay, confronting the huge theatre full of gazing human beings. I do not think a word I uttered during this scene could have been audible; in the next—the ball-room—I began to forget myself; in the following one—the balcony scene—I had done so, and for aught I knew, was Juliet, the passion I was uttering sending hot waves of blushes all over my neck and shoulders, while the poetry sounded to me like music while I spoke it, with no consciousness of anything before me, utterly transported into the imaginary existence of the play. After this I did not return into myself till all was over; and amid a tumultuous storm of applause, congratulation, tears, embraces, and a general joyous explosion of unutterable relief at the fortunate termination of my attempt, we went home."

She was still not twenty when she thus entered the stormy ways of life, and the simplicity of the girlish heroine could scarcely be better shown than by the incident that followed. "I sat down to supper that night with my poor rejoicing parents, well content, God knows, with the issue of my trial, and still better pleased with a lovely little Geneva watch, the first I had ever possessed, all encrusted with gold-work and jewels, which my father laid by my plate, and I immediately christened Romeo, and went, a blissful girl, to sleep with it under my pillow." This pretty piece of childishness touches the reader's heart for the impassioned Juliet who was so easily made happy. Her life became a fairy life after this for a time, and she got everything that girl could desire, with a pleasant natural girlish unconsciousness that it was her own earnings which procured these advantages, and total absence of all self-assertion and independence. Oh, H——" she cries, "I am exceed-

ingly happy! *et pour peu de chose*, you will perhaps think: my father has given me leave to have riding-lessons." Besides this wonderful delight (and it was a genuine delight to her, as she became an admirable horsewoman) the happy difference between poverty and comparative wealth made itself instantly felt. She who had enjoyed the revenue of "twenty pounds a-year, which my poor father squeezed out of his hard-earned income for my allowance," had now gloves and shoes in abundance; fashionably-made dresses, instead of "faded, threadbare, and dyed frocks;" and all the adulation of success and the flattery of society, to boot. And it is easy to imagine her happiness when, knowing so well, as she did, what the needs of the household were, she presented herself, on the first Saturday after her beginning, "for the first and last time, at the treasury of the theatre," to receive her salary, "and carried it clinking to my mother; the first money I ever earned."

In the midst of all this delightful success and triumph, which seems to have been absolutely free from any of those drawbacks of publicity which we are told surround a young woman on the stage—but who could venture to offend, even by too much admiration, Charles Kemble's carefully-guarded daughter, who was no less sedulously watched over than a princess?—there was still one death's-head which the young *débütante* seems always to have beheld before her, the most solemn of warnings. She had heard of the "moral dangers" of the life upon which she had entered, without apparently understanding very clearly what these dangers were; "but the rapid vacuity of the last years of my aunt Siddons's life had made a profound impression upon me—her apparent deadness and indifference to everything, which I attributed (unjustly,

perhaps) less to her advanced age and impaired powers, than to what I supposed the withering and drying influence of the over-stimulating atmosphere of emotion, excitement, and admiration in which she had passed her life." This delicate moral peril is not what we generally think of when we speak of the danger of the stage; but the young actress, member of a family "to whom, of course," she says with spirit, "the idea that actors and actresses could not be respectable people did not occur"—feeling no alarm for the risks she knew nothing of, yet thought of this with a shudder, asking to be preserved from it when she said her daily prayers.

The young performer remained the chief attraction of Covent Garden for a considerable time; and her theatrical life is perhaps more piquant, as being much less common, than her society life, which was brilliant and pleasant, without containing much that is different from other people's experience. There is, however, always an interest in knowing something of that dingy world behind the scenes where ordinary human creatures are changed into dazzling heroes and heroines; and where the feet, especially of the young, are surrounded by so many snares. But Fanny Kemble's life behind the scenes seems to have been much like her life at home. She was taken to the theatre by one of her family, "and there in my dressing-room sat through the entire play, when I was not on the stage, with some piece of tapestry or needle-work, with which, during the intervals of my tragic sorrows, I busied my fingers." The green-room, with all its intrigues and commotions, was as much a mystery to her as to the girls who stay at home. "When I was called for the stage, my aunt came with me, carrying my train. . . . She re-

mained at the side-scene till I came off again, and folding a shawl round me, escorted me back to my dressing-room and my tapestry." This seclusion of the brilliant heroine, the cynosure of all eyes, between the intervals of public applause—her Berlin-wool and her careful aunt, the mixture of the cloister or the domestic parlour (perhaps a still completer image of sobriety and dulness) with the overwhelming excitement and illusion of the theatre—is wonderfully amusing and original. And the criticism to which the young actress was subjected is equally interesting. She does not tell us, like Macready, of any tremblings of anxiety about the newspaper criticism of the morning. A pair of anxious eyes, more alarming than those of any critic, watched her every movement; and this was the tribunal before which she trembled.

"I played Juliet upwards of a hundred and twenty times running, with all the irregularity and unevenness and immature inequality of which I have spoken as characteristics which were never corrected in my performances." My mother, who never missed one of them, would sometimes come down from her box, and folding me in her arms, say only the very satisfactory words, 'Beautiful, my dear!' Quite as often, if not oftener, the verdict was, 'My dear, your performance was not fit to be seen. I don't know how you ever contrived to do the part decently; it must have been by some knack or trick, which you appear to have entirely lost the secret of: you had better give the whole thing up at once than go on doing it so disgracefully ill.' This was awful, and made my heart sink down into my shoes, whatever might have been the fervour of applause with which the audience had greeted my performance."

It is one of the advantages of autobiography that it often reveals quite unawares, often more clearly than the principal figure, some other,

perhaps more remarkable, human creature, whom no adventitious illumination of genius in his or her own person had withdrawn from the obscurity of common life. This Mrs Fanny Kemble does for her mother, whose severe discipline sometimes draws from her the ghost of a complaint, but whose admirable mind and character she has set forth with rare and unconscious power. Her father was perhaps the best beloved of her parents, and his is a name already known to the public; but it is with much inferior force that he stands out in the early record of his daughter's experiences. Her mother was evidently her chief instructor, and her most important critic, the most influential agent in her life.

There are many other very interesting sketches in the book—as, for instance, that of Sir Thomas Lawrence, the sentimental painter, who nearly turned young Fanny's head, and who had brought confusion before her time into the house of her aunt Siddons, two of whose daughters he had loved in bewildering succession, though without (since Death was beforehand with him) marrying either. His gallantry and his enthusiasm and his woes make up a curious little sketch which will be new to many readers. While her mother watched her performance with such jealous eyes, and delivered such uncompromising judgments at night, Lawrence sent her long letters in the morning, going over every point with minute criticism. Surely never was girl of genius so carefully watched over. Meanwhile the lively girl acted of nights, and lived an easy girlish life at home during the day, going to every dance she could get a chance of, becoming a bold and fine rider, reading good books—Blunt's 'Scripture Characters,' and suchlike—and writing long letters

about everything to one beloved and constant friend. We are bound to add that young Miss Fanny Kemble at twenty does not write with half so much spirit and vivacity as does Mrs Fanny Kemble nearly fifty years after. The letters are not only less interesting, but much less youthful and bright at the earlier date—which is a curious effect enough: though perhaps, when one comes to think of it, not an unnatural one: for there is nothing so solemn, so conscientious, so oppressed by a sense of its own importance and responsibilities (when it happens to take that turn), as youth.

We have made no reference to the literary efforts in which the clever girl, up to the moment of her *début*, considered her chances of fame to lie—the tragedies, one of which Mrs Jameson thought beautiful, and which affected that graceful critic so powerfully. Mr Murray gave her four hundred pounds for the copyright of one of these dramas—Francis I., which, we are obliged to confess, we never heard of, but which enabled her to buy, she tells us, a commission for her brother, which was an admirably good *raison d'être* for any drama.

It is time, however, to come to an end, for Mrs Kemble's book is almost inexhaustible, and might keep us occupied for the rest of the number. It is an entirely pleasant book, full of many bright pictures, and no bitterness—introducing us to a number of notable people, but throwing no dart of deadly scandal either at the living or the dead. In this way "an old woman's gossip"—which was, we believe, the name under which most of the work was originally published in an American contemporary—will bear a very favourable comparison with other recent works of extended popularity.

CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE.

III. MAGAZINE-WRITERS.

THE simplest autobiographical sketch is always a delicate matter, since enemies and charitable friends alike are sure to find something to take exception to. They are severe on the score of good taste, and receive with suspicion and distrust anything that sounds like self-laudation. At the same time a piece of frank autobiography must in any case possess exceptional interest. There are personal confidences which can hardly come within the reach of the most intelligent and indefatigable author of memoirs; while the public are always in the kindly expectation that vanity and excessive self-esteem may get the better of you, and gratify their legitimate curiosity in a fashion you never contemplated. But in writing of magazines and magazine-contributors, it is an absolute necessity that we should become autobiographical—may we add, that it is a pride and a pleasure as well? For 'Maga' was beyond dispute the parent and the model of the modern magazine; and the idea then originated has proved so happily successful that she has had a most miscellaneous family of promising imitators, and has founded a school of extraordinary popular literature. We have no wish to indulge in self-glorification, and we may leave the contents of the 124 volumes to speak for themselves. But we may say that the form which the Magazine quickly assumed has never been improved upon or materially altered; and it seems to us that there could hardly be a more conclusive tribute to the intelligence and experience which planned it. In modestly taking

credit for the position the Magazine has made for itself, and for the volumes it has contributed to contemporary literature, we need make the panegyric of no individual in particular. We merely pass in review the corps of writers which has invariably found its recruits among the brilliant talent of the day—talent which in very many instances we can congratulate ourselves on having been the first to recognise. On a dispassionate retrospect, we see little reason to believe that there have been visible fluctuations in the quality of the Magazine, although it necessarily gained in vigour and repute in its riper maturity with extending connections. And we can show at least that its pages have always been the reflection of the literary genius and lustre of the times.

The Magazine found the field free when it was planted, and circumstances were eminently propitious. In 1817 there had been a general revival, or rather a genesis, of taste—a stirring of literary intelligence and activity. The newly-born Quarterlies were no doubt the precursors of the Magazine; but from the first it asserted its individuality, striking out a line of its own. Its monthly publication gave an advantage in many ways. It threw itself as earnestly into party fight, and expressed itself equally on the gravest questions of political and social importance. But it could touch them more quickly and lightly, though none the less forcibly. In political warfare, as in the fencing-room or on the ground, flexibility of attack and defence goes for much.

When the strife is animated and the blood is hot, it is everything to recover yourself rapidly for point or for parry. The political contributors to 'Maga' came to the front at once, and if they thrust home and hard, they fought fairly. They seemed to have hit off the happy mean between those articles of the newspaper press that were inevitably more or less hastily conceived, and the elaborately-reasoned lucubrations of the quarterly periodicals, which took more or less the form of the pamphlet. Or to change the metaphor, those flying field-batteries of theirs did excellent execution between the heavy guns of position and the rolling musketry-fire of the rank and file; and 'Blackwood' from the first won the political influence which it has since been its purpose and ambition to maintain.

But it is not exclusively or even chiefly on its political articles that it has the right to rest its reputation. Perhaps its most cherished traditions are more closely associated with the *belles lettres*. In 1817 the public taste had been educated with marvellous rapidity to the consciousness of new wants and to longings for intellectual luxuries. Never had name been more happily bestowed than that of the "Wizard of the North" on Sir Walter Scott. His genius, and the fresh *vraisemblance* of his romance—intensely patriotic yet most catholic and cosmopolitan—had been working like spells on the intelligence of his countrymen. Thenceforth there were to be open markets for the delicate productions of the brain; and men of culture and fancy, if they satisfied the popular taste, could count upon admirers and on generous appreciation. There were currents of simpler and more natural feeling; everybody had unconsciously become something of a critic—

knowing, at all events, what pleased themselves. Writers were *en rapport* with a very different class of readers from those who had gone into modulated raptures over the polished formality of 'Sir Charles Grandison,' and had been charmed with the philosophical melody of Pope. The springs of the new impulse were in Scotland. Scott had familiarised his countrymen with those graphic pictures of homely scenery, with those vivid sketches of local character, of which everybody acknowledged the truth and the feeling. Their instincts, with the training he had given them, had come to reject the artificial for the real. People who had been welcomed to the hospitality of the baronial tower of Tullyveolan; who had been brought face to face with the smugglers of the Solway and the stalwart sheep-farmers of Liddesdale; who had laughed with the learned Pleydell in his "high-jinks" at Clerihugh's, and looked in on the rough plenty of the cottage-interior of the Mucklebuckets,—could no longer be contented with false or fantastic pictures of habits of existence which lay beyond their spheres. There was a demand, we repeat, for the subordination of the ideal to the actual—a demand which must gain in strength with its gratification—and the originators of the Magazine proposed to satisfy it.

In one sense, as we have already remarked, the contributions were lighter than those in the Quarterlies. The latter asserted their *raison d'être*, as against the more ephemeral productions of the press, on the ground of their more deliberate thought, and the elaboration and polish of their workmanship. Nor let it be supposed for a moment that we dream of undervaluing that. All we mean to point out is, that the predominant

ing and distinctive idea of the new undertaking was the assuring its contributors chances of fame, for which its predecessors could offer no similar opportunities. If we persist in referring to the *Quarterlies*, it is for purposes of illustration—certainly not for the sake of invidious comparison. Essayists and reviewers like Jeffrey and Sydney Smith, and, subsequently, like Southey and Hayward, might collect and reprint their articles; but it was in the shape of a miscellany of the fragmentary and fugitive pieces that were rescued from unmerited and unfortunate neglect. Each individual article had to stand on its merits; it was a stone cast at random, as it were, on the cairn which was to serve as a monument to the memory of the writer. By inserting the publication of works in serial form, 'Blackwood' passed volumes and libraries of volumes through his pages. A book that might have been ignored had it been brought out anonymously, or merely introduced by some slightly-known name, was there sure of extensive perusal and something more than dispassionate consideration. The subscribers to the Magazine had come to feel something of self-pride in the growing success and popularity they contributed to. At all events, they were predisposed to look kindly on the *protégés* whom 'Maga' vouched for as worth an introduction. It was for the more general public afterwards to confirm or reverse the verdict. The *débutant* had the encouragement of knowing that he addressed himself in the first place to a friendly audience; and those who know anything of the finer and more sensitive literary temperament, will understand that a consciousness of this kind goes far towards promoting inspiration.

The new Magazine was fortunate

in having begun as it hoped to go on. At that time the name of "the Modern Athens" was by no means a misnomer for the Scottish capital, for there was a brilliant constellation of Northern Lights. The men who had grouped themselves round the founder, and thrown themselves heart and soul into his enterprise, were Wilson, Lockhart, and Hogg, Galt and Gleig, Moir and Hamilton, ("Delta" and "Cyril Thornton,") Alison (the historian), Dr Maginn, and others, who, at that time, were less of notorieties. And we may observe that, from the first, the strength of the new venture was very much in the close union of its supporters. The directing mind was bound to the working brains by the ties of personal intimacy and friendship. It is now more than forty years since the death of Mr William Blackwood, and the generation of his colleagues and friends has been gradually following him. But our notice of his Magazine would be manifestly incomplete, if it did not comprehend a passing notice of a really remarkable man. Nor can we do better than quote some paragraphs from the obituary remarks which appeared in the number for October 1834,—the rather that they were written by one who knew him well, and who had every opportunity of appreciating his qualities, whether from personal intimacy or in business relations. Next to Professor Wilson, there was no one to whom the Magazine in its early days was more indebted than to John Gibson Lockhart; and previous to his leaving for London in 1826, to undertake the direction of 'The Quarterly,' no man contributed more regularly or more brilliantly to its pages. Mr Lockhart thus wrote:—

"In April 1817 he put forth the first number of this journal—the most important feature of his profes-

sional career. He had long before contemplated the possibility of once more raising magazine literature to a point not altogether unworthy of the great names which had been enlisted in its service in a preceding age. It was no sudden or fortuitous suggestion which prompted him to take up the enterprise, in which he was afterwards so pre-eminently successful as to command many honourable imitators. From an early period of its progress his Magazine engrossed a very large share of his time ; and though he scarcely ever wrote for its pages himself, the general management and arrangement of it, with the very extensive literary correspondence which this involved, and the constant superintendence of the press, would have been more than enough to occupy entirely any man but one of first-rate energies.

"No man ever conducted business of all sorts in a more direct and manly manner. His opinion was on all occasions distinctly expressed—his questions were ever explicit—his answers conclusive. His sincerity might sometimes be considered as rough, but no human being ever accused him either of flattering or shuffling ; and those men of letters who were in frequent communication with him soon conceived a respect and confidence for him, which, save in a very few instances, ripened into cordial regard and friendship."

Mr Blackwood's sons inherited their father's friendships ; and for sixty years the editorship of the Magazine has been continued in the family with the same unvarying good fortune and ever-increasing influence. To the warm personal regard, to the perfect confidence existing between the Blackwoods and their contributors, we believe that the consistent character and continuous success of the Magazine are mainly to be attributed. Then, as since, the writers have not only, for the most part, held the same general political views, but have been united in something like a common brotherhood by common tastes and mutual sympathies. There is a good deal in the "daff-

ing" of the 'Noctes Ambrosianæ' that is, of course, dramatically exaggerated. As the fun in the Blue Parlour sometimes grew fast and furious—as when North stripped for his "set-to" with the Shepherd, and when those jovial worthies made a race of it with Tickler in their wheeled chairs from one apartment to another—as the eating and drinking was always Garagantuan when these men of "not only good, but great appetites," "forgathered,"—so the arguments and declamation often became brilliantly hyperbolic, and are seldom to be taken absolutely *au sérieux*. But in these inimitable 'Noctes' we have the actual reflection of the standing relationship of the contributors ; of men who belong, by virtue of unspoken vows, by some community of labour, opinions, and feeling, to an order of which they are reasonably proud, and for whose associations and traditions they have an affectionate veneration ; of men who are happy to meet, when they have the opportunity, on a common ground, renewing and refreshing the old acquaintanceship, which may have been formed, after all, at second-hand, and only by hearsay—and who, we may add, have no sort of objection to indulge in the discreet conviviality of such "flows of soul" as, in our more degenerate times, has replaced the boisterous hospitality of "Ambrose's."

From the first, the new serial that had taken the thistle for its badge, and was to show the features of old George Buchanan on the cover, struck a key-note that was at once patriotic and popular. Even now, amid much that has long gone out of date, there seems to us to be delightful reading in those early numbers. There was metal most attractive in those gossiping papers on the Gypsies, inspired, if not dictated, by Sir Walter Scott—as full of *esprit* as of know-

ledge of the subject. The race of vagabonds and "sorners" and masterful thieves had become the objects of most romantic interest since the novel-reader had been taken to the ruined roof-trees of Dorniecleugh—had been introduced to "Tod" Gabriel on the hills of the Liddell; and the randy beggar-wife, faithful to the death, had died by Dirk Hatteraick's pistol in the cavern. To our fancy, there is no finer passage in all Scott's poetry than Meg Merrilies's prose apostrophe to the weak laird of Ellangowan, when he was brought face to face with the vagrants his bailiffs had driven from their hearths; nothing more touching than her regretful reference to the good old easy times, and her allusion to the wild devotion of her people. Then came 'Mansie Wauch,' by Delta, and some of the very best of Galt's Scottish novels, claiming precedence in that perennial series of fiction which has been streaming ever since through our columns; to be followed, no long time afterwards, by that charming military story, 'The Subaltern,' from the pen of the ex-Chaplain-General of the Forces, who, we are glad to say, is still alive, the father of the contributors to 'Maga.' From that time forward, with neither stint nor check, the Magazine has been standing sponsor to English classics. For many years it may be said to have owed the lion's share of its attractions to the vigorous versatility of Wilson and Lockhart. Besides the long and lively course of 'The Noctes,' what an infinite variety of tales and essays, poems and *critiques*, Christopher scattered broadcast! The flow of wit and scholarship, of pathos and keen critical humour, was inexhaustible. With Professor Wilson as with Sir Walter Scott, to appreciate the author, one should know something of the man. With a redundancy

of bodily health that reacted on his mental activity, never was there a more large-minded or great-hearted gentleman. We recognise the gentle strength of his nature, when he stood bareheaded of a winter day at the funeral of his old comrade in literature, the Ettrick Shepherd—the solitary mourner of his class. He was too earnest not to be sometimes severe, but his hardest hitting was straightforward and above-board; and though his bite might be savage, there was no venom in it. We know very few essayists who have made their individuality so vivid to us, and hence the home-like and inexpressible charm of his writing. Had his lines been cast in a different lot of life, he might have been such a humble genius and genial vagabond as old Edie Ochiltree. The "callant" who was lost in the moorland parish, where "little Kit" had been sent to be educated by the worthy minister—who risked his life in shooting sparrows with the rusty gun that had to be supported on the shoulders of two or three of his schoolfellows—grew up into the accomplished sportsman of "Christopher in his Sporting Jacket." No wonder that the stalwart professor of moral philosophy, who loved the shores of Windermere and the solitary tarns of the Lake country; who dropped his red-deer in the "forests of the Thane," and the grouse on the wild moors of Dalnacardoch; who was such a "fell hand" with the "flee" in the Tweed and its tributaries, and was only beaten by the neck, *teste* the Shepherd, by the Flying Tailor of Ettrick "himself,"—should have kept the kindly freshness of his spirits unimpaired, and had a somewhat supercilious contempt for those he sweepingly designated as Cockneys. Wilson, in his manly frankness, detested false sentiment and fine-spun theories, with all that was affected and arti-

ficial in social conventionalities : he held to those old-fashioned ideas of fast party fidelity and public patriotism which it became the fashion to decry as the signs of narrow-mindedness by those who might envy his logic and his eloquence. Were his writings less universally known, we would willingly linger over his memory, for he has left his mark on the Magazine. What the author of the *Waverley Novels* was to fiction, Christopher North was to magazine-writing : and he must have sensibly influenced the tone of many a man of talent, who may fairly put forward pretensions to originality.

From Wilson we pass by a natural succession to Professor Aytoun, a kindred spirit in many respects. Aytoun, while thoroughly cosmopolitan — witness his ‘*Bon Gaultier*’ ballads, executed in partnership with Mr Theodore Martin—was at the same time characteristically Scottish ; and much of what we have said of his prototype applies to him. All the Lays that elicited from southern reviewers the admission that Scotland could still boast of a poet, appeared originally in the pages of ‘*Maga.*’ So did an instalment of the germ of that admirable parody ‘*Firmilian*,’ which agreeably tickled the subjects it scarified—see the lately-published memoir of Sydney Dobell. A fragment of ‘*Firmilian*’ was published as a review of a poem of the spasmodic school. It was done so cleverly, and was so exceedingly natural, that it completely took in one of the devotees of the “spasmodics,” who had been in the habit of denouncing the injustice of ‘*Maga.*’ Whereupon Aytoun finished and published the extravaganza, which surpassed alike the beauties and eccentricities of the gentlemen he so ingeniously satirised. And *apropos* to Aytoun, we may refer to the collections of ‘*Tales*

from Blackwood,’ literally so voluminous, which have proved by their very wide circulation the charity that suggested the idea of reprinting them. For perhaps there is no happier story-satire in the language than his “How we got up the Glenmutchkin Railway;” not to speak of others of his contributions, such as the “*Emerald Studs*,” “How we got into the Tuileries”—a veritable foreshadowing of the follies and frenzy of the Commune—and “How I became a Yeoman.”

The piquancy of a dressed salad or a *mayonnaise* lies in the conflicting ingredients that are artistically blended. So De Quincey was a welcome guest at the imaginary symposia in Gabriel’s Road, as he was an honoured member of the fraternity of the Magazine. Yet there could hardly have been a greater contrast to Christopher, the hero of “the sporting jacket,” than the dreamy philosopher, who, in spite of diligent searching, had never discovered a bird’s nest, because he always took his rambles in the country between sunset and sunrise. The ‘*Confessions of an Opium-Eater*’ excepted, all De Quincey’s most striking works were given to the world in the Magazine. And there is one aspect in which the conjunction of Wilson and De Quincey in its pages is especially worth noting. For they may be said unquestionably to have given contemporary criticism its present form and spirit, when they asserted the supremacy of nature as a standard over the affectation and morbid sentiment of the Cockney school of their day.

In as different a vein as can be imagined, yet no less likely to live, are the sea-tales of ‘*Tom Cringle*.’ The ‘*Log*’ and the ‘*Cruise of the Midge*’ are simply inimitable in their way. They had never been anticipated by anything in similar style, and they have never since

been even tolerably copied. It was so strange that they should have been written by a landsman, that people were slow to believe it. We have heard it reported that professional critics can hit off a flaw here and there, when "Tom" sends his seamen aloft among the spars and the rigging, or is handling his craft in a gale on a lee-shore. We defy the uninitiated even to doubt, so admirable is the *vraisemblance*, if not the omniscience. But the grand triumph of Michael Scott's genius is in the apparent absence of anything approaching to art. He is the hearty sailor, full of life and animal spirits, recalling his adventures with the enthusiasm that comes of reviving pleasant associations. We see him back again in the midshipman's berth with the reefers as he sits behind the Madeira decanter sparkling to the wax lights. "Poor as I am," he observes, in his bluff nautical lingo, "to me, mutton-fats are damnable." Or, luxuriating in the crisp biscuits and salt-junk, which he prefers to rarer delicacies — "Ay! you may turn up your nose, my fine fellow, but better men than you have agreed with me." And then how his pen runs on, as memories crowd upon him in actual inspiration! And how lightly and naturally he can change the vein, passing from gay to grave, and from the picturesque to the familiar! Now you are among a knot of jovial spirits in the wardroom, in a running fire of wit, anecdote, and repartee, pleasantly flavoured by a whiff of the brine and the powder. Now a sail is sighted, and there is the excitement of a stern-chase before all hands are piped away to quarters. What can be more animating than the "Action with the Slaver," when the lumbering Spaniard, jammed up against the Cuban coast, has been laid aboard by the "tidy little Wave"? or the involuntary cruise in that "tiny Hooker," when, pay-

ing the penalty of his indiscreet curiosity, Lieutenant Cringle is walked past the windows of the comfortable sleeping-room he has quitted, to be carried into captivity by Obed under the very guns of the Gleam and the Firebrand. The incidents crowded upon incidents in all the impressive intensity of this illusive realism, might have made the fortunes of a score of sensational sea-novels. But what we admire even more are the masterly descriptions. Unfamiliar scenery takes form and shape; strange and barbarous races change to familiar acquaintances; the glow and glories of the tropics are borne into our very souls. We know not how it may be with other people, but since we used to wrap ourselves up in 'Tom Cringle' in the days of our boyhood, we have always had an affectionate longing for the West Indies: nay, we have even had a kindly feeling for the plague-stricken coasts of West Africa, since we went up "the noble river" among the slaving gentry and the mephitic exhalations in the company of Brail and Lanyard and old "Davie Doublepipe." For that reason we own to having been disappointed in everything we have since read on those countries,—even in Kingsley's 'At Last,'—though we had hoped that the Rector of Eversley was the very man to do them justice, as he had fully shared our anticipations and impressions. If we set foot on the wharves of Kingston tomorrow, we are persuaded that we should feel ourselves thoroughly at home, though we might be sadly impressed by the changes of time,—by the ruin of those hospitable merchants and planters,—even—tell it not in Gath—by the results of the emancipation, which turned whole households of attached and industrious slaves into a listless, indolent, good-for-nothing peasantry. We should recall those rides in merry

company, through morning mists or noon-day sunshine, where the tropical luxuriance of the landscape, the magnificent shapes of the cloud-capped mountains, and the commanding views through the limpid air, over hill, and dale, and azure ocean, were unrolled before our enraptured eyes in the most picturesque of all Turner-esque panoramas.

And like every born humorist, Michael Scott had a dash of almost melancholy seriousness in his nature. He is never more eloquent than among those scenes of beauty that are either gloomy or even oppressively melancholy,—witness the moonlight “nocturne” on the broad bosom of the West African river, rolling its torrent onwards to the broken bar, between the pestilential mangrove copses on its muddy banks; or the break of the morning there, when the mists are melting before the fiery splendours of the ascending sun; or the reverie on the translucent waters of the Cuban creek, when the Firebrand is threading the narrow passage that winds under the batteries of the Moro Castle; or the interview with “the Pirate’s Leman” on her deathbed, when the hurricane is bursting over the house and the hills are gliding down into the valleys. His impulses towards the pathetic became occasionally uncontrollable, and when his feelings were stirred he wrote as they moved him. We are persuaded of that, because he shows so evidently a horror of “boring” his readers, or becoming mawkishly sentimental. Like Byron in “Don Juan,” or his own Aaron Bang, who had been betrayed for once into solemn talk over the duckweed-covered waters of the mountain pool in Hayti, he always hastens to pass from the one extreme to the other. Thus he breaks away at the Moro, when the steward is made to announce that

dinner is waiting; and he hastens to dive into the captain’s cabin, where they have a merry night, “and some wine, and some fun, and there an end.” And we may be sure indeed, when he has been exceptionally grave or pathetic, that his melancholy is the prelude to some “excellent fooling.” In short, he never stales in his infinite variety of mood; and if we are conscious that we have been betrayed into an undue digression on him, it is because we owe him profound gratitude as one of the writers whom we delight to dip into again and again, though we have pretty nearly got him by heart. We fear, besides, that he is not nearly so well known nowadays as he deserves to be; and how we envy those who may have hitherto been strangers to him, should they make his acquaintance upon our introduction!

Looking at him in that point of view, we may plead forgiveness for writing of “Tom,” as we love to call him, and giving him a relatively long notice. Many of the contributors who succeeded him have become household words and classics wherever the English tongue is spoken or English literature held in regard. There is Warren, with his ‘Diary of a late Physician’ and his ‘Ten Thousand a-Year.’ He passed medicine, law, and divinity successively through his hands in three successive romances; and it was but natural that the lawyer and active politician should have made his legal and political romance the most masterly of the three. ‘Ten Thousand a-Year’ will always be a historical memoir *pour servir* those who care to study the political situation in England after the passing of the Reform Bill. Bulwer and George Eliot, Thackeray, Dickens, and Trollope, and most novelists of mark, have since described the humours of the canvass-

ing committees and the hustings. But without indulging in any comparisons, we may safely say that no one of them has surpassed the humorous excitement of the neck-and-neck contest for Yatton. And then the dramatic romance of the great Yatton case! Surely never were musty legal documents and shrivelled parchments handled so freshly: the fluctuations in the grand trial at the York assizes remind you of "the gentle passage of arms" in 'Ivanhoe,' in the lists of the neighbouring Ashby-de-la-Zouch. You listen breathlessly, and throw yourself into the speeches, as champion faces champion, and Mr Subtle breaks a lance with the Attorney-General. As certain *dilettanti* students are in the habit of going to Dumas as an agreeable authority on the French history of the League and the Fronde, so we believe there are many of us who have learned our English law, and taken our notions of the forensic powers of Lords Abinger, Brougham, &c., from the great suit of "Doe *dem.* Titmouse, *versus* Jolter and others," and from such portraits by Warren as Subtle and Quicksilver.

George Eliot's 'Scenes of Clerical Life' were written for the Magazine; and with all our admiration for the extraordinary power which has ripened so wonderfully with experience and maturity, in our opinion she has scarcely surpassed them. The intuitive perception of character; the profound intelligence of the human heart, and the intense sensibility to human moods and feelings; the subdued drollery and the ready sympathy, were all naturally *rehaussé* by a freshness that must almost inevitably fade more or less. Then look at the late Lord Lytton. First comes the Caxton series, culminating in 'My Novel;' and perhaps in the whole range of English literature, in its comprehensive grasp of the

motley life of England, there is nothing to rival that remarkable book. The statesman and the refined man of fashion, the country gentleman, the artist, the student, and the practical philosopher, have embodied all their multifarious experiences in it. Seldom has there been so striking a group of more noble portraits, so set off by their surroundings or more graphically reproduced. If anything, Bulwer was in the habit of going to extremes in idealising the characters he held up for admiration; and the loftiest of them were stately almost to formality, in their habits of thought as in their forms of speech. But in days when we fear humanity tends to degenerate, that was the safe side to err upon; and we can never take up one of Bulwer's late novels without rising a better and a wiser man for the reading of it; while such manly or exalted conceptions as Squire Hazelden and Egerton, Lord L'Estrange, Riccabocca, and Parson Dale, were thrown into higher relief by the knowledge displayed of the shady side of our nature in such finished scoundrels as Randal and Peschiera and Baron Levy. And it is to be remarked that 'The Caxtons,' with its successors, were conceived in an entirely novel style by a writer who stands almost alone for the varied originality of his resources. They rank now incontestably as the first of his fictions; and we may take some credit for having given them to our readers on their merits, when we might have been tempted to give them a sensational introduction, with all the advantages of the author's name. In his essays of the Caxtoniana set were embodied the teachings of a most practical familiarity with life, by a man of the world who had a supreme contempt for all that was false, base, and ignoble. Gay young men about town, would-be aspirants to fashionable

notoriety, who laughed at the morality of recluses and held lectures from the pulpit in horror, might be content to profit by the high-minded teachings that were replete with wit and worldly wisdom. It is a melancholy satisfaction that our connection with Lord Lytton was being drawn closer year after year, till his death cut short that last of his novels which had excited so much critical curiosity. It was a proof the more of his inexhaustible versatility, that in bringing out his 'Parisians,' he was still able to shelter himself to a great extent under the mask of the anonymous. We do not say, that when the secret was made public, there were not suggestive touches that might have betrayed the authorship. But it is almost unprecedented that so thoughtful and prolific a writer should have retained his inventive variety, as well as the vigour of his execution, entirely unimpaired to the last.

Talking of prolific novelists and such pregnant essays as the 'Caxtoniana,' reminds us of another valued and lamented friend. For many a year "Cornelius O'Dowd" was one of the mainstays of the Magazine. For many a year, in unstinted profusion, he lavished those manifold literary gifts that, with him as with Lord Lytton, appeared practically inexhaustible. Time had toned down the rollicking joviality of the author of 'Charles O'Malley' and the scapegrace heroes of the mess. But the mirthful humour flowed freely as ever, and the intuitive knowledge of life had deepened and widened. Like other distinguished literary men, Lever had consented to banish himself in the consular service. Possibly, the seclusion of exile was not unfavourable to his unflagging powers of production. At least he was less exposed to those social seductions which must have proved

a snare at home to one who was so great a favourite of society. It is certain that Lever to the last would always answer to the call; and that he could be safely counted upon at the shortest notice for a story that would show slight traces of haste. While the distance from which he looked on seemed to tend to give breadth and quickness to his political vision without dimming the penetrating sagacity of his insight, there was no lighter or more lively pen than that of the work-worn veteran. He had always much of the French *verve* and *esprit*, and he lost far less than he gained by living with men more than with blue-books and daily newspapers. Seldom has any one had a more happy faculty of treating the gravest questions with a playful earnestness which compelled attention, while it carried his readers along with him; of mingling wit and drollery with sound sense and satire, and making ridicule and good-humoured *badinage* do the work of irritating invective. He had learned to know, like the great Swedish statesman, with how little wisdom the world may be governed; and having ceased to be scandalised by the blunders he exposed, he treated them with the benevolent tolerance of resignation.

By a not unnatural chain of associations, we are carried back from Lever to another of our contributors, who translated the adventures of sensational fiction into action. George Ruxton's adventures were even more romantic and spirit-stirring than those of 'Con Cregan,' the Irish 'Gil Blas.' There have been few more extraordinary men—no more daring explorer; and had his career not been cut prematurely short, England would have heard a great deal more of him. With winning manners and highly-cultivated tastes, Ruxton had a passion for the existence of the prim-

itive savage; toil and hardship were positive enjoyment to him; and he was never happier than when he had taken his life in his hand, with the chance of having his "hair lifted" at any moment. His self-reliance was indomitable; his spirits rose in his own society, away among the wolves and the *coyotes* of the wilderness; and yet he could make himself so much at home among the trappers and the mountain-men, that those rude specimens of half-savage society had learned to look on him as one of themselves. Born hunter and vagabond as he seemed, he wrote with a grace and easy dramatic power which many an eminent professional *littérateur* might have envied. The 'Life in the Far West,' which "Blackwood" brought out in a series of articles, may still be regarded as a standard authority on countries which have changed but little, and races that, in the course of extermination, had hardly changed at all. As for the narrative of the long ride through New Mexico to the upper waters of the Divide, where, like Con Cregan, he "struck the Chihuahua trail," it is impossible not to follow it with the most intense interest. How the adventurer passed by sacked villages and jealously-guarded *presidios* through a country that was raided by roving Indians—how he escaped assassination by his solitary follower—how he saved himself from snow-drifts, and starvation, and death from exposure to the bitter cold—how he ran the gauntlet of war-parties and lurking savages, and managed to forage in winter for himself and his beasts, so as to keep body and soul together,—all that is told with a vigorous simplicity which, almost incredible as the story often sounds, carries irresistible conviction of its truth. George Ruxton was among the foremost of that race of accomplished explorers, who came home from

experiences of privation and peril to write books which must have been literary successes independently of their intrinsic interest.

From Indian fighting on the Mexican frontier to the Carlist wars of old Spain is an easy transition, and Ruxton and his writings remind us of Hardman. Before betaking himself to letters, which seemed his natural vocation, Hardman had tried his hand at arms, and in these he might have attained equal distinction. He came back from serving in the Spanish Legion to embody his adventures and observations in some of the most exciting stories that have ever enlivened our pages. In spite of constitutional experiments and the introduction of Liberal rule, Spain and the genuine Spanish people have changed almost as little as Mexico and the Mexicans; and in Hardman's novel, 'The Student of Salamanca,' we have pictures of Spanish life that might be reproduced in some *pronunciamento* of to-morrow. Nothing can be more inspiring than the exploits of the dashing Christino captain, who had been driven to choose his side by the cruelty of the Carlist partisans. Nothing more telling or more characteristic than the story of the love-affair; the Carlist attack on the house of old Herrera; the glimpses of the match at ball; of the soldiers carousing in the *ventas*; of the gipsy shaving the poodle by the watch-fires in camp; of the *Mochuelo* and his band out "on the rampage;" of the confinement and escapes of Don Luis and Don Baltasar; of the veteran sergeant extricating himself from the ambush where all his comrades had fallen,—all these are actual photographs of incidents of partisan warfare. Hardman had not only travelled and fought in the Peninsula, but he had lived in close companionship with Cervantes and Le Sage; and in his vivid pages

he has caught the very spirit of the genius of those masters of Spanish romance.

From the men who had put epics and ballads in action, we turn to the most fascinating of feminine poets, and can glance back through our pages on some of the most charming of their pieces. Conspicuous among them are Mrs Hemans, Mrs Southey, and Mrs Barrett Browning with her 'Cry of the Children ;' and there are others who will come forward in the crowd, when we look back in a final retrospect. We owe not a few contributions to George Henry Lewes, and many more to William Smith, the author of 'Thorndale.' Smith likewise had a powerfully philosophical intellect, and his writings were invariably characterised by striking vigour and originality. Ferrier, also, the great Scotch metaphysician, and a writer who seemed to have the faculty of transmuting philosophy into poetry without the loss of its weightier elements, first gave many of his more notable papers to the world through our pages. Then there was Croly—a constant contributor—whose novel of 'Salathiel,' with its rapid changes of scene and remarkable variety of dramatic incident, was so widely read at the time, and well deserves to be remembered. Among the earliest of our friends was pleasant James White, author of the 'Eighteen Christian Centuries,' who contributed 'Sir Frizzle Pumpkin,' 'Nights at Mess,' &c. ; and Sir Samuel Ferguson, whose 'Father Tom and the Pope' is a gem of audacious Irish humour unsurpassed in the writings of either Lever or Maginn. The higher culture of the universities has also always had good representatives. Eagles "the Sketcher," who for long was our art-critic, excelled in his vocation, and was gifted with an extraordinary command of his

pen, as the editor of 'Fors Clavigera' had some reason to know. Coming to our own day, to Lucas Collins, the editor of the 'Ancient Classics,' we owe many charming disquisitions, many masterly criticisms. We feel it to be more delicate as we draw nearer to our own times, and are tempted to make allusion to living celebrities. But at least we may take the opportunity of barely naming a few of them, leaving the reputation they have made to the appreciation of the public. *Place aux dames*, and succeeding the bevy of poetesses we have alluded to above comes Mrs Oliphant, whose connection with us began with 'Katie Stewart.' The lowly-born maiden who was welcomed only too warmly by the long-descended Erskines, is the heroine of a very perfect little Scots story, which yields in no degree to 'Mrs Margaret Maitland of Sunnyside.' There was much, besides, which it might be tedious to detail, before the appearance of the 'Chronicles of Carlingford,' which were at once made famous by 'Salem Chapel.' It would be more than superfluous in this present year of grace to launch out in praise of one of our most valued friends, since happily we may hope that for many a day to come Mrs Oliphant will speak for herself in our columns. Then there are Anthony Trollope, Charles Reade, and Robert Blackmore ; John Hill Burton, Laurence Oliphant, William Story, and R. H. Patterson : while among soldiers who vary their severer professional studies with recreations in general literature and fiction, are the Hamleys, the author of the 'Battle of Dorking,' Colonel Lockhart, and others whom we have even more scruples in naming. And there is Andrew Wilson, whose 'Abode of Snow' reminds one, *mutatis mutandis*, of Ruxton's adventures on the Mexican frontier. Let

us reiterate, that of the writers we have mentioned—there are exceptions that of course will strike everybody—most had their first introduction to the literary world through ‘Maga,’ and published the works to which they first owed their fame in its pages. They were unknown to literary society when they made their first literary success with us; and we may observe, that in the system of advertising names adopted by many of the younger serials, they would never have had a similar opportunity of distinguishing themselves. We presume that there is something to be said on either side; but we fancy that, so far as the satisfying of our readers is concerned, argument, as well as experience, is decidedly in favour of our own system. We have always preferred to leave each separate article to be commended or condemned for itself, or, at all events, with the reflected *prestige* of the company in which it chanced to find itself. We believe our practice to be a safe one, even in the case of writers of name and experience. It is hardly in human nature not to be hasty and careless in the workmanship, when you are assured that your simple name will suffice to push the sale of a magazine; and when a man takes merely to trading on his name, he is tempted to “turn” his intellectual capital too quickly. If he is versatile, emotional, and impulsive; if his peculiar genius is given to confounding fanciful speculations with soundly-reasoned theories, and writing sensational-political romance on the strength of crude judgments, then the fever of flurried activity is apt to become a chronic disease. His articles lack consistency and backbone; his style becomes florid, diffuse, and redundant; his sentences are inextricably entangled; and there is a breakdown in the very grammar.

Authors of genius or talent must make a beginning, and though there may be the defects of inexperience in the first of their work, yet it is almost sure to have the inestimable charm of freshness. There are novel-writers and novel-writers; and some who make ample incomes by their indefatigable pens have steadily improved to a certain point with patience and practice. But it will be found, we believe, that many of our cleverest novelists have never greatly excelled their maiden production; and we can recall many an instance where they have never equalled it. They may grow more pretentious and more profound; they have developed their ingenuity and in the technicalities of their art, as they have advanced in their knowledge of men and manners; yet in becoming less simple, and naturally unaffected, they may lose at least as much as they have gained. Then, as we are glad to know, there are the ties of gratitude and friendship. The man who has received a kindly recognition of his powers, at a time when he was essaying them with natural diffidence, can hardly help retaining some lifelong regard towards those who gave him seasonable encouragement; while the directors of a magazine feel grateful in their turn to the talent that has been infusing fresh blood in their veins. Intimacies, literary and social, are founded on mutual esteem; and for ourselves, we are glad to say that these literary friendships, confirmed by constant personal intercourse, have generally only terminated with life. If such genial relations carry their inevitable penalty, it is only to say that sorrows are inseparable from existence. It is sad enough from time to time to have to deplore those losses that have fallen heavily of late on the Magazine by the deaths of so many of its

stanchest contributors. Time may be trusted in some shape to fill the blanks ; while the works of those who are gone will remain as monuments to their memories. Yet it is sometimes difficult not to repine at the loss of the inestimable literary treasures that have been laboriously accumulated through a lifetime, and which cannot be transmitted by bequest. We must bid farewell to the ripe and gifted friend just when we feel most reluctant to spare him ; and we are left to lament the invaluable store he was turning to such excellent purpose.

We can understand that there are stronger reasons than there once were for bringing out a new periodical under the patronage of well-known names. It would seem that the ground is never so fully occupied that there is not room for a fresh success ; and yet the competition is excessive, and the struggle for existence must be a hard one. Among the crowd of familiar friends and well-established favourites, untitled respectability might be put out of its pain before it had fair opportunity to assert itself. Whereas the reading world, eager for novelty like the citizens of Athens, may be induced to prick its ears to a preliminary flourish of trumpets. The prospectus ought to go for much ; it should shadow out, if possible, some feature of startling originality, and, at all events, be a masterpiece of seductive promise. As a matter of fact, we can seldom conscientiously congratulate its composer either on the ingenuity of novel resource or on the ability of the literary execution. We have remarked, as a rule, and it has struck us as singular, that the *carte du pays* is apt to be commonplace. It may possibly be that the editor feels that the eyes of England and of jealous rivals are upon him ; and he may be weighed down under the oppression of his literary respon-

sibilities. We have often fancied that he might profitably take a hint from those City gentlemen, who, when they launched their magnificent schemes on the Stock Exchange, and asked their credulous countrymen for millions, used to call in the services of a professed financial artist to draw up their advertisement. Being perfectly dispassionate, and having no stake beyond a heavy commission, the charmer brought his tact and experience to bear ; he did his work with an untrammelled fancy, and generally did it effectively. But if the prospectus be bald or halting, that is of the less consequence, as the promoters of the periodical have surer cards to follow. They can print, in long-drawn parallel columns, the list of their promised supporters. A very imposing catalogue it will be, and assorted with extreme liberality on the most comprehensive principles. We have been adverting to City matters, and praising Aytoun's 'Glenmutchkin Railway' as a City story. Just as the Highland chiefs, when they "pit their best foot foremost," the Lowland landed gentry, and the "great Dissenting interest," were impartially represented on the Glenmutchkin Board, that they might invite the confidence of various classes of constituents ; so the programme of the associated contributors should have attraction for each sub-section of the community. There are cabinet ministers with the heaven-given mission of setting the world to rights on every conceivable point. There are reformers whom an inscrutable Providence has relegated to private stations, but who raise their voices all the more vociferously, and are the most enthusiastic converts to their own eloquence. There are financiers who come near to perfection as theorists, and statisticians who can make figures prove almost anything. There are social econo-

mists with hobbies of their own, warranted to relieve our civilisation of its miseries; and educationists who are infallible in relation to school boards. There are fussy historians who mistake themselves for politicians, and poetical philanthropists who pride themselves on being practical. There are popular divines of every creed and shade of opinion, who find scarcely sufficient elbow-room in their pulpits; and there are scientific sceptics who express a condescending regard for the religion they labour indefatigably to undermine. There are strategists, and travellers, and consuls, and missionaries, with possibly a sprinkling of archbishops, and ambassadors, and law peers,—and with all these come the professional gentlemen of the pen, who are in the end the real backbone of the periodical. These eminent gentlemen lend their names, and probably promise the contingent reversion of their services; though, if they were regularly to forward contributions to the Magazine, it would have to make its appearance at least twice in the week. It settles down in reality to a working staff, that does a full half of the writing; while the rest of the space is devoted to sensational articles by the brilliant celebrities that may be trusted to “draw.”

We have no desire to underestimate the possible value of these articles. Other things being equal, genius is always preferable to mere clever mediocrity; and there is a natural interest in the unreserved expression of opinion by a man who has been helping to make history, and who, by his talent for the stump or his parliamentary *prestige*, has been swaying great masses of the populace. But we cannot help thinking that the thing is being overdone; and the men we would most willingly listen to, are the men we seldom or never hear. When Sir Henry Rawlinson is persuaded

to give his views on Central Asian politics, or Lord Stratford de Redcliffe writes on the affairs of the East, every one reads, and reads with good reason. These men are among the greatest living authorities on subjects on which most of us are profoundly ignorant; and whether we give our assent to their ideas or differ from them, we know that they are the fruit of unrivalled experience. Had Mr Gladstone's temperament been more deliberately reflective and cautious; had his mind been cast in a more philosophical mould, we should very gladly listen to him on a dozen different subjects. Few men are more nervously eloquent in speech; few men can put a doubtful argument more persuasively. Most thinkers, who in the heat of animated debate may say considerably more than they mean, become comparatively guarded when they take up the pen. But it is highly characteristic of Mr Gladstone, that he is more reckless in writing than in speech. In the House he has acquired the practice of a certain self-control, in the conviction that any sophistry or exaggeration of statement must be promptly exposed or corrected. On the platform, before an assembly of admiring friends,—still more in the pages of a popular magazine,—he shakes himself loose from all sense of restraint, and gives himself up to the blind bent of his impulses. We can hardly misjudge him. For, in the first place, we know that, in the multiplicity of his employments, it is impossible that he can do the scantiest justice to the articles that he turns out by the bushel on the most burning questions, domestic and international. In the next place, the internal evidence as to the haste with which they are dashed off is unmistakable. We have already alluded to unmethodical arrangement, involved sentences, doubtful English, and slipshod

grammar, although these become of comparatively slight importance in the glitter of Mr Gladstone's reputation. Were the matter as weighty as the author's name ought to infer, we should resign ourselves to some additional trouble in interpreting him, or in following the entangled trains of his reasoning. But the fact is, that in many instances his articles are merely the crude fancies of an exceedingly able and gifted but excitable man, who has the dangerous knack of expressing most eloquent convictions on those questions on which he has just altered his mind, or to which he had flashed his thoughts the day before yesterday. In his case the evil begins to cure itself: for when Sir Oracle is perpetually opening his mouth, people cease to listen; and when predictions and warnings are being continually falsified, few but the most fanatical devotees to the seer will attach any serious importance to them. It is, however, a precedent which may be followed with more dangerous results by public men of inferior eminence, but with self-control and more Machiavellian astuteness; while the habit of expecting notorieties to attach their names to their articles often leads even presumably competent judges into very ludicrous blunders, when they have not their sign-posts to guide them. We could tell a story of a most disparaging notice in a very ably conducted weekly upon a series of articles on one of our recent "little wars." The accomplished critic took occasion to expose the blunders and shortcomings of the writer, and was especially severe, not so much on the strategy of the expedition as on the writer's narrative of it. Possibly he might have seen reason to modify his remarks had he been aware that the author he criticised so cavalierly was really himself the

successful leader of the expedition.

The casting about for distinguished names in all quarters has another consequence. Since these gentlemen hold most contradictory opinions, they must have an almost absolute latitude permitted them; and while the editor in great measure relieves himself from responsibility, he is proportionately deprived of control. There can be no question that his teams are powerful and showy, but they are "straggling all over the place;" and while his leaders are heading in one direction, his wheelers are backing in another. So long as such reputation as he has is likely to circulate his article, each clever monomaniac has *carte blanche* for the ventilation of his peculiar ideas. If he advocated them in a periodical that was notoriously of his own way of thinking, it would be well and good. Standing on the safe foundations of the English Constitution, we should not be sorry that even the advanced socialists had their organs; and short of preaching assassination, or actual sedition, we should leave their editors undisturbed in Leicester Square. But it seems to us that an ingenious theorist may do very considerable mischief by being permitted to pass himself into the company of calm and judicious thinkers. We fancy we know something of the mass of omnivorous readers, and we have reason to doubt how far their acumen may be trusted to distinguish between what is good and evil. At best, many of them will skim the articles superficially, and be lightly impressed by plausible speculations adroitly veiled in seductive sophistries. A paradox which they fail to comprehend, and are quite incompetent to scrutinise, has an inexpressible charm for them. While, on the other hand, there are fanatics on certain social and political

questions that must largely concern the national future, who have no scruples as to means which will be justified by the end, and who know at least as well as we the temperament of the people they are writing for. It is their immediate object to make proselytes at any price; and their personal vanity is interested besides in obtaining a respectful hearing. These shrewd apostles of some new and startling revelation have practised the art of making the worse seem the better reason; and in the easy flow of their vigorous language, can make specious fallacies pass for sterling truth. Probably the editor may have some secret sympathy with them; at all events he appreciates the talent which ought to shed a lustre on his pages; or it is possible that personally he may disagree with them entirely. In any case, he must wait till his next issue before applying to some other of his contributors for the antidote, and in the meantime the poison is diffusing itself unchecked, and may be inoculating many of his lighter-minded subscribers.

Perhaps it may be old-fashioned prejudice, but our predilection for the system which bands contributors together on common principles has been confirmed by long experience. It strikes us, moreover, that there is much to be said for it on common-sense grounds; for it should be the object of a leading magazine to influence opinion for definite purposes; and not merely to enlighten the public, but to direct them. Surely that can be best done by concentrating and disciplining its forces, and showing unmistakable colours, to which earnest contributors may rally. The editor knows his men, and may be presumed to know his business. He respects their independence far too much to interfere gratuitously on points of detail, and may consent on minor points of difference to

waive his own personal opinions. But it is his to see that a certain consistency is preserved—to watch, above all, that nothing should slip in which shall essentially clash with the consistency of the magazine. The principles of the magazine may go to extremes; they may be stupidly reactionary or extravagantly radical. At all events, the reading public, being aware of their general drift, are prepared to accept them for what they are worth, according as they admit or reject the arguments; while the contributors, to all intents and purposes, are unfettered. They are in quite a different position from the leader-writers on the daily press, who are supposed to accept standing retaining fees, to abdicate their individuality, and to argue to order; or who may work in gangs of various political complexions, so that, should the paper see reason to shift its ground, it can employ a new but conscientious set of day-labourers. The political contributors to a magazine may either write or leave it alone; there need never be a lack of willing volunteers to fight its battles on the familiar lines. Nor does that homogeneous system imply any repression of free discussion. It merely marshals combatants on either side, so as to make the most efficient use of their services; for periodicals of every shade of opinion have a general circulation, and the good old days are pretty well departed, when the magazine-subscriber was wedded to a single love, surrendering all right of private judgment. Now the staunchest party clubs must subscribe impartially to all newspapers and periodicals; and, indeed, it may be the manifestos which appear in the enemy's camp that are read with the closest interest and attention.

What between the claims of politics and fiction, with those of articles

on promiscuous subjects, literary reviewing is apt to go to the wall. Nor do we believe it to be the province of the "Monthlies" to undertake any methodical survey even of the representative books of the day. That ought to be left to the daily journals, which should treat current literature as current news ; or to those weekly literary newspapers which make reviewing one of the chief reasons of their being. To recognise and bring forward special merit ; to sit as judge in appeal on the more hasty opinions of the daily and weekly press ; and to maintain the higher and more cultivated standards of literary judgment,—is the proper province of the magazine reviewer. But it must be confessed that in the Monthlies authors get unequal measure ; and there are rising men who may fairly complain of being ignored ; while some rival of similar, though inferior, pretensions, has the honours and the profit of general notice. The fact being, that, so far as authors are concerned, it is very much matter of luck, and partly matter of fashion. The name of the lion of a London season is naturally in people's mouths ; there is a run on his book at the circulating libraries ; he has the art of making a thrilling narrative of adventurous travel or exploration : he has unearthed a race of anthropophagi in primeval forests, or has stumbled over a buried city or the traces of the lost tribes ; or he may have broached some new and startling revelation, social, political, or religious, and be making a host of admiring proselytes. His book, for one cause or another, recommends itself to the handling of some clever contributor, who sees in it the materials for an article which shall be vigorous or original. Several writers are struck by the idea: two or three interesting papers make their appearance simultaneously, and others follow suit in due course.

The subject of their praises has cause for congratulation ; and if he has been brought so conspicuously before the public, he may have deserved it by superior literary talent and the graceful charm of his style.

Yet we cannot withhold a certain sympathy from the meritorious but more matter-of-fact explorer—from the laborious scholar or the indefatigable archæologist—who sees the book comparatively neglected, on which he had hoped to rest a reputation. The most enthusiastic pursuit of one's favourite researches must be sweetened by the gratification of your legitimate vanity. At the same time, these hazards of the lottery are natural, and nobody need have reasonable ground of complaint. Perhaps the fairest way to do equal justice between the readers of magazines and the writers who deserve to be specially introduced to them, is to group a cluster of representative books in a series of articles at irregular intervals. The reviewer goes to work on miscellaneous materials, that supply all the demands of novelty and variety. He can hardly betake himself to a more fascinating task than the sitting down to a well-spread library table, and picking and choosing among the volumes within reach of his hand. Here a biography, there a book of travels : and when he has fagged his brain with some thoughtful political essays, he relaxes and inspires himself with a brilliant novel. We give him credit for cultivated and sympathetic humanity, and, as a rule, he will far rather praise than condemn. Yet every now and then he may feel irresistibly impelled to become prosecutor and executioner, as well as judge, when he dips his pen in gall, with the consciousness of an imperative duty. For there is a pretentious combination of dullness, egotism, and self-assurance, which clearly deserves exemplary

chastisement; and then the most lenient and kindly-disposed of critics must have a satisfaction in laying on the knout. Nor can we deny that there is a certain temptation to it, always assuming that you have fair and honourable excuse. For a scarifying article is sure to find admirers, and the most benevolent of mortals will enjoy it with a chuckle, if the severity is relieved by genuine wit, and if the writer has shown cause for his strictures; although rude invective and unsupported abuse, should they have passed the supervision of an incompetent editor, will infallibly miss their mark and recoil on the coarse assailant.

Magazine poetry is scarcely made so much of now as it used to be some half a century ago. Then, in the days of the "Drawing-Room Annuals," the "Literary Souvenirs," and the "Books of Beauty," these ventures were often launched by poets themselves on their promotion. Naturally they exerted their best talent, and tried to turn out a copy of verses which should be the chief attraction of each of their issues; while the jealousy that is supposed to be characteristic of the poetic temperament was kept in check by prudential considerations. When each annual was running a neck-and-neck race with its neighbour, no practical editor could possibly afford to reject the effusions of rival children of the Muses. We do not say that the verses in those annuals were pitched on a very exalted key. They were sweet rather than sublime, and neat rather than thoughtful. But they were often melodious and graceful of their kind, and fairly satisfied the taste of the times. And now and again one of the heaven-born bards might be prevailed upon to air his pinions in their pages. In the lives of Scott and Byron, Campbell, Moore, and Southey, we

have repeated application for eleemosynary contributions, although, indeed, they were eleemosynary only in the sense that they were prayed for in the humblest and most flattering terms. For the proposal was generally coupled with the offer of a tempting *douceur*; and sometimes the remuneration was exceedingly handsome, even considering the reputation of the immortal who earned it. Nowadays, tastes seem to have altered; and magazine poetry is rather a drug than otherwise. Poets who look either to the main chance or to immortality, or to both, appear to aim at more ambitious work, and to prefer to publish independently. At the same time, we should certainly be the last to say that the poetry of fugitive pieces is a lost art; and from the humorous verses of the late Lord Neaves to the vigorous translations of Mr Theodore Martin, and the inspirations of some of our anonymous friends, our pages have been graced by a succession of pieces which have well deserved collection and republication.

Of course the modern magazine must have been developed sooner or later in its present shape, in a world of busy brains and fertile fancies. But assuredly the man who first originated it must be regarded in the light of a public benefactor, inasmuch as he took the first great strides towards perfection, and made the pleasure of generations that have since passed away. Nothing is more astonishing than the vitality of many a half-forgotten acquaintance, except, perhaps, the multiplication of new favourites in the face of most animated competition. Those who have given any thought to the matter, will be reminded at once of several of our contemporaries which continue to make their appearance under the discouragement of comparative neglect. You see them entered on the lists

at the libraries. They have been falling steadily upon evil times, and we have been conscious of a growing tendency to dulness. As a rule, in point of the quantity of the contents, their friends have no reason to complain. But they are become the refuge of archæologists and antiquaries of extraordinary erudition on special topics, who, like Mr Jonathan Oldbuck, may knock in vain at door after door in Paternoster Row. You are somewhat overdone with exhaustive essays, on round towers and kitchen-middens. You have technical treatises on scientific gunnery, and elaborate lucubrations on disestablishment or on education boards. Such subjects by themselves would swamp anything. But from time to time you come upon articles that would prove attractive anywhere, or on a novel by some writer of undoubted reputation. We believe the presence of the former may frequently be attributed to that encouragement of unknown talent we have adverted to, as being the salt and salvation of judiciously-managed periodicals. As for the novels that seem somewhat misplaced, we have another theory. They are often by veterans who have been staling with familiarity, and falling out of fashion. The names of the writers are become a drug with sensational editors and their patrons, and they have lost much of their pristine freshness. But on the other hand, they have literary skill and experience; and now and then, by some happy thought, or in an effort to regain the ground they have been losing, they achieve what may pass for an actual triumph. While, though the scale of pay must necessarily be regulated by the circulation, yet occasionally in the scramble for magazine publicity, an arrangement may be made

with some novelist of mark who has been crushed aside in a block on the more popular serials.

If there have been occasional deaths, they have been far more than compensated by the birth-rate. We may suspect that some of these young and seemingly flourishing *débutants* are tending already towards premature dissolution; but there are others which, as we have reason to believe, are assuring their projectors a competency. There as elsewhere, those who have sown liberally are most likely to reap harvests in proportion. We should say that the birth of most of these magazines has been in this wise: A ready novel-writer has hit the public taste, and has possibly struck out something of a new idea in fiction. For a time he or she—for in many instances those writers have been ladies—has been content to look about for outlets in the older-established serials. Sooner or later, however, thanks to his extraordinary productiveness, and in a measure to some marked peculiarity in his style, the author is brought to a check. Unless each of his stories is ushered in through the pages of a magazine, it seems to him that they have scarcely been creditably introduced; and, moreover, he expects a double profit. So it occurs to him that he may do better to become his own publisher, and he either risks his savings in his new speculation, or looks about for partners with capital. He may or may not have overestimated his personal credit. But apparently the odds are in favour of his fairly floating his venture; and for a time, at least, he goes on sailing in halcyon weather. In the exhilaration of a fresh and promising start, he redoubles his feats of address and agility. One novel follows fast on another; sometimes a couple

of them are being driven abreast; his brain is seething with tempting conceptions; and unless he is to sink before he has well cleared the harbour, he must have the art of keeping up a monthly sensation. In some degree he must sacrifice the whole to the parts. But by an exertion of ingenuity, each successive issue is made to contain some striking or startling scene: dramatic incident and episodes are equally distributed; and purchasers who fancy his style get full value for their shillings. He has his sect of literary craftsmen who model themselves after him, imitating his foibles as closely as his merits; and as he naturally has a liking for those who flatter him with such unmistakable sincerity, his staff is very apt to be overcharged with them. Charles Dickens, with his followers, is a striking instance of that. With those who formed themselves upon his books, while they had little or none of his genius, the pathos which often took the form of affectation with himself, degenerated into morbid and unhealthy sentimentality. Without his sense of humour, they caught something of his trick of humorous expression; and they exaggerated his mannerisms till their own became intolerable. But as Dickens was a real and original genius, he exercised an influence which lives, and is likely to live, although it led to a violent reaction by way of protest. Thus the glorifiers of the dogma of the Utopian Christmas-tide, with mistletoe, and mince-pies and turkeys raining, manna-like, from heaven, with the flood-gates of mercy and philanthropy unlocked, and fountains of charity flowing from the rock, have created the school of cynics and positivists, who chiefly insist on the melancholy coincidence of Christmas-bills, bankruptcies, snowstorms, and starvation. The indi-

vidualities of smaller men are circumscribed by their own publications; but in these it generally continues to assert itself till there are visible signs of the public having had enough, when they slowly expire of inanition or pass into other hands.

Fiction is the staple of those most frivolous of serials; but the fiction must be freely eked out with what is commonly known as "padding." That is very much of the same general character, and is intended to combine instruction with entertainment—the entertainment largely predominating. Stage reminiscences are made a speciality in some quarters, with the stories and scandals of the green-room, and the successes of transcendent geniuses, amid thunder-showers of bouquets and hurricanes of applause. There are picturesque sketches from the by-ways of history, and the cabinets and back-staircases of palaces. Fragments from the biographies of adventurers are much in favour,—of men of fashion, and elegant *roués*, and brilliant *causeurs* and *raconteurs*. Thanks to the scissors and paste, the scraps and cuttings, helped out here and there with a lively fancy, one might amass a second-hand literature of the Horace Walpoles, the Selwyns, the Boswells; the Mirabeaus, the Talleyrands, the Montronds—for the gay society of the golden ages of the French capital presents subjects of never-failing interest. The clubs and the older gaming-houses—Crockford's, Frascati's, and the *tripots* of the Palais Royal—have been done again and again; with the historical coffee-houses in the city, and the *chefs* and the *restaurants* of Paris. There are novel speculations on such inscrutable mysteries as the identity of Junius or the Man with the Iron Mask. Necessarily that class of article can hardly show great original-

ity ; but the papers may be tolerably readable, and they have their uses. They impart a good deal of that miscellaneous information which is serviceable to those shallow talkers and the indolent members of society, who are too apathetic to study for themselves, and who would as soon read the Fathers as solid history ; while, at all events, the stories and the jests which they borrow can never stale with the most constant repetition.

Then the pencil is called into requisition with the pen, and many of these magazines are profusely illustrated. We suppose there are people who admire the illustrations ; but it must be confessed that in the generality of instances the quality is decidedly inferior to the quantity, and the artist comes short of the author. It always strikes us that the conceptions are stereotyped ; in any case they are monotonously artificial, and the writer of the story must often be mortified and disappointed by the pictorial interpretation of his cherished ideas. A man whose character should have decided individuality, comes out as a very commonplace exquisite, in correctly-cut clothes, which remind one of those masterpieces that adorn the pamphlets of advertising tailors ; while a great-souled woman who has poisoned her mother, and been the victim of a passionate attachment for her grand-nephew, blazes out in the conventional beauty of the *salons*, and wears their simpering smiles. It must be owned that the hack-artist is sorely put to it ; and as he is inadequately paid for any original exercise of the imagination, we may excuse him if he falls back upon servile reproductions. Yet those illustrations may have some permanent value, and we can conceive their supplying serviceable materials for the social historians of future genera-

tions. Look back now on the very best of them, by artists who, like the late Mr Walker, have taken the highest rank among painters in water-colours, and what chiefly impresses one is a sense of the ludicrous—thanks to the quick revolutions in the fashions. We marvel now at those costumes of the Regency, which are scarcely to be distinguished from Gilray's caricatures, with waists barely reaching to the armpits, and their imposing superstructures of elaborately-powdered hair. And so our grandchildren, when grown up to man's estate, will laugh heartily at the severity of the Grecian skirt replacing the balloon-like inflation of the crinoline ; and it is to be hoped that, in the complacency of a superior morality, they will be shocked by the cut of those *décolletée* dresses which show beauty unadorned save for its jewellery.

Perhaps we might give the palm for illustrations to the so-called religious magazines. The most popular of them must have an immense circulation, and appear to have no lack of ingenious contributors. They are conducted with enterprise, and—although we should be unwilling to question the single-mindedness of their proprietors—with a conspicuous share of the wisdom of the serpent. We cannot say that we care much for the imitations of the religious art of the middle ages—for representations of Jael driving the nail into Sisera, or for groups of the home-sick Hebrews in flowing vestments twanging their melancholy harps by the waters of Babylon ; nor yet for the pictorial illustrations to their fiction, which are simple reproductions of most worldly life, and the too familiar style of secular contemporaries. But their views of rural nature, to use a common phrase, are very often “wonderfully good for the money ;”

and you may come on a series of most effective little woodcuts, illustrating some "bits" in our home landscape, or the quaint archæology of historical cities. As for the selection and arrangement of the contents, we repeat that they seem to be governed in many instances by shrewd trading principles. Our pious Scotch folks, in particular, are being educated to a latitude of Sunday reading which would have shocked the last generation of Sabbatarians. The latter might have denounced the new system as a jesuitically subtle device of the Enemy. It is a perversion and almost a prostitution of the proverb of "Tell me the company you keep, and I will tell you what you are;" and many a profane narrative walks in unquestioned on the first day of the week because it comes locked arm in arm with a homily or an edifying dissertation on the parables. For there is no possibility of denying that the contents are most curiously mixed. The predominant tone has a savour of sanctity. You have a series of papers on practical religion by some scholar and divine of unimpeachable orthodoxy. You have analytical criticism on the text of the sacred writings, with an occasional argument for their historical authority. You have hymns and sacred songs that are more or less sweet and harmonious. You have notes of philanthropical missionary labour in the rookeries and back slums of our great cities, with reports of the progress in the conversion of the Jews, and turning pagan slave-hunters in Central Africa into law-abiding Christian agriculturists. All that is highly consistent and praiseworthy. But we doubt whether boys, like the "Whaup" and his brothers, in Mr

Black's novel, 'A Daughter of Heth,' would welcome the Sabbath periodical as a Sabbath blessing, were it not for those fascinating pictures which unfold before their enraptured eyes a panorama of worldly possibilities that read to them like the 'Arabian Nights.' We do not say that these novels are not generally unobjectionable in their tone. Their authors know their business too well not to avoid the worse than ambiguous episodes which may land their heroes and heroines in the divorce courts. They make their personages as guarded in behaviour as in speech; they would shrink from depicting an elopement, and hesitate even over a stolen kiss. But after all, the writers are precisely the same people who are in the habit of contributing to 'Tyburnia' or the 'Holborn.' And although their principles on the whole may be trustworthy, yet we doubt whether, in the idea of the more careful parents of the rising generation, a complete edition of their works would altogether conduce to edification. We are no hyper-rigid moralists ourselves, believing that harmless fiction can seldom be unreasonable. But we are bound to call attention to the fact, that in this new propaganda, the reputation of the editor cuts both ways. He must always be a man highly considered by the religious world; often he is a divine of undoubted piety and learning, though belonging to one of the broader schools of theology. But while his name should be a guarantee for sound morality, it must serve, at the same time, as a *passe-partout* for anything to which he gives his *imprimatur*; and we suspect that it blinds many worthy people to the snares that are being spread for their strait-laced simplicity.

MR GLADSTONE AND THE NEXT ELECTION.

THE renewed activity in the Liberal camp plainly shows that an urgent necessity for doing something has come home to the Opposition. The times are bad, and the Eastern Question has begun a new chapter of its history. The Berlin Settlement is being successfully carried out, and promises to endure. The memory of the past is growing a little dim; the future is necessarily obscure. The former offers a fine field for ingenious and romantic disquisition; the latter for dark and dismal prophecy.

The future attacks from the Opposition will accordingly be delivered from a different stand-point from the past. We shall hear no more of an unprincipled Ministry trying to drag the country into war against Russia, or of an inhuman Ministry refusing joint action with Russia. No; the cry for the future will be that a little statesmanship would have prevented the late war altogether; and that a more resolute and courageous policy would have wrested from Russia even the slight territorial advantages which were finally, with the sanction of Europe, conceded to the victor. "It is not," says Sir William Harcourt at Oxford, "that they have opposed the ambition of Russia, but that they have opposed it in the wrong way, with the wrong weapons, and that they have played the game, and secured the success of Russia." In other words, the end and aim of their policy were always right—to oppose the ambition of Russia. But they played their game badly, because they lacked "a little sagacity—a little forethought—a little courage." It is not, however, of Sir William Harcourt's speech that we care to

write. It is for him to explain how it is that a Ministry with such sound aims but such unskilful conduct, attained to such complete supremacy in England and in Europe as to be held even by himself solely responsible for the Berlin Settlement; and how it is that the Opposition have been so completely misunderstood, both at home and abroad, as to their real aims, whilst denouncing the protection of British interests, and applauding the humane and beneficent deeds of Russia. The result of the North Norfolk election, which the Liberal party had deliberately made to turn upon these very questions, is a pretty conclusive rejoinder to Sir William Harcourt's eloquence, and to the more forcible than accurate arguments by which Mr Forster sought to sway the minds of the constituency.

It is not given to every man to bend the bow of Achilles, and Sir William Harcourt's oration, however brilliant, is but a feeble attempt to follow in Mr Gladstone's wake. That distinguished statesman writes and speaks with such extreme volubility that three-fourths of what he says are consigned to speedy oblivion. But a recent article of his in the 'Nineteenth Century' has attracted considerable notice, and is so evidently intended to begin a new chapter of political discussion, that we make no apology for inviting our readers' attention to it in detail. The object is to show, in a much more complete and masterly way than Sir William Harcourt is capable of, that Mr Gladstone and his followers have been and are the true foes of Russia; the Ministry its real friends—blind instinct and base calculations of party

profit being somewhat inconsistently assigned as the propelling motives of their policy. That is the real drift and avowed object of Mr Gladstone's article upon the "Friends and Foes of Russia."

The bare statement of this object is enough to take one's breath away, remembering the various episodes of the last three years. But when a statesman of Mr Gladstone's eminence comes forward to challenge public opinion on an issue of such importance, and is hailed by his supporters with an enthusiastic but not very discriminating approval, it becomes necessary to examine this novel thesis and the grounds upon which it is put forward. If our readers will follow us through that examination, we will show them that the whole article is one tissue of extravagant inconsistencies from the beginning to the end. Sir W. Harcourt has missed its mark altogether. There is not a word in it about curbing or opposing Russian ambition, or defending British interests. But both Mr Gladstone and Sir W. Harcourt are agreed upon this, that nothing which the Ministry has done was or could have been right.

Who have been and are the real friends, or the sturdy opponents, of Russia?—that is to be the question of the future, and is propounded as the Berlin Settlement draws to a completion. Let us, however, look back for a moment. By that settlement, and by the Anglo-Turkish Convention, the Ministry have, with a view to restrain Russian aggression; reconstituted the Ottoman empire; they have placed Austria between Russia and Constantinople, they have maintained the commercial freedom of the Straits and the Black Sea, and prepared for the defence of the Asiatic frontier. The military measures necessitated by the recent conduct of Russia in Afghanistan and its consequences, are also in

process of execution. The empire has been and is being rendered secure, in spite of all that Russia has done or may hereafter be capable of doing.

During the progress of that task, a large section of the Liberal party, fully one-half, has been avowedly and angrily on the side of Russia. It hounded her on to a war of aggression. It called for an open infraction of the treaties which guarded South-eastern Europe. It demanded joint action with Russia, so as to break the neck of Turkish power on the Bosphorus. Though it waged the Crimean war to ward off contingent peril to Constantinople and the Bosphorus, it viewed the actual advance of the Russians to Tchataldja with satisfaction. It refused the vote of credit whilst the armies of the Czar were at the gates of the Turkish capital. It denounced the calling out of the Reserves, and indeed every kind of preparation, naval or military. The persistent cry was, Only look at the strong humanity of the Czar and the noble sympathies of his subjects. Let us emulate their good deeds, and join in emancipating the subject-races of the Turk—in other words, in inflicting upon them all the havoc, misery, and carnage of war, with a view to those reforms of administration which all desire, but which can only be worked out by patience and peaceful exertion.

Months and years roll on, and in spite of this wayward faction, the Ministry is stoutly supported; and without firing a single shot, by the mere force of tenacious resolution triumphing over adverse circumstances, it compels the Czar on certain terms, not of vital importance, to submit his projected treaty to a European Congress, and accept at its hands a settlement satisfactory to Great Britain and to Europe,

by which a large portion of the stipulated *jura victoris* was abandoned. Again the months roll by, and from all hands—from Constantinople, from Berlin, from Vienna, and from St Petersburg—comes the gratifying intelligence that this settlement, one of the greatest triumphs of peaceful diplomacy ever effected by this country, is being continuously and successfully carried out “to the letter and the complete spirit.” Public opinion at the time, posterity in the end, will applaud that achievement of the British Ministry as one of the grandest ever effected by the power and justice of England. But in the various eddies which impede the regular flow of public opinion, though they fail to stem or divert it, it is thought that dissatisfaction is discernible. The times are hard, the bill will have to be paid, the country is fast being delivered from the strain which Russia has so long inflicted upon it; with a sense of deliverance comes a certain loosening of the obligation to support the Ministry, and a disposition to unfurl again the flag of Opposition, provided that the leaders will undertake to guard the country against the world-wide machinations of its rival.

According to this view, the promised success of the Berlin Settlement offers a new point of departure in home party politics, and brings with it a new chapter of political discussion. It is calculated that the patient who clung to his doctor will on recovery be alienated by the sight of the bill, and by suggestions that his ailment was exaggerated, and might have been prevented; that the suitor who has won his case will find that he has still some costs to pay, and suspect that litigation might have been avoided. It will, we believe, be difficult to bamboozle the public in that way; and the more active sec-

tion of the Liberal party will be somewhat hampered in the attempt by their past speeches and pamphlets. But that the endeavour will be made is obvious. The recovered patient, the successful suitor, will be asked, bill in hand, Is this the way in which he wishes his affairs to be directed? And in order that the question may be put by those who will, notwithstanding what has passed, undertake in future to consult his interests, and guarantee him against a recurrence of disaster, a change of front must be speedily executed; and for the way to do so—unblushingly, and with consummate adroitness—commend us to this article of Mr Gladstone's on the “Friends and Foes of Russia.”

The scope of this remarkable manifesto, in which Mr Gladstone has exerted all his energy and all his ingenuity to effect a reunion of his own party, and provide a net wide enough to catch all malcontents (from whatever cause) with the Administration, is as follows: He describes the Liberal party as the real enemy of Russia, and the “British Tories” as its traditional friends; and for this purpose no words are dark enough wherewith to paint the horrors of “Russianism.” His next point is, that the “relation between Russia and the Liberals of this country” during the past three years was purely exceptional—due to the circumstance that Russia in that period laid aside her Russianism, and “achieved by her unaided efforts a work of liberation;” and for this purpose no words are bright enough to paint the virtues of Czar and people, and even of individuals belonging to that dangerous class called “society.” His third point is, that “the temporary defection of the Tories from the Russian camp” during the last three years, and their standing hostility, crossed

and streaked by veins of peculiar intimacy, has, notwithstanding the skill and daring with which they have played their game with a view to politics at home, conferred on Russia advantages which the policy of Liberalism would have kept wholly out of her reach. His fourth point is, that the Ministry has truckled to Russia. It allowed the cession of Kars, Batoum, and Bessarabia, for which Mr Gladstone presumably would have gone to war; for it is well known that the cession could not have been prevented without war. Further than that, the submission of the Ministry to Russia in the case of their Affghan embassy was undue and humiliating, not to be matched in our modern history; and apparently our warlike ex-Premier would have avenged it in blood. His fifth point is that the Ministry, however much they truckle to Russia, have at all events declared war on the Parliament and the Constitution of their own country.

This is a bold and daring manifesto. It is evidently published with a view to the elections, and it propounds as the great question which the people must then answer, *whether the present mode is the mode in which they wish the country to be governed.* Mr Gladstone may possibly, as he reviews his own antecedents during the last three years, have some twinges of conscience whether he is the man to assail the Ministry from the platform of anti-Russianism. He, at all events, sees, or thinks he sees, that the hour at least has come when the attempt should be made. The strain of immediate danger is over; the enthusiasm for the Minister perhaps will cool when he is no longer a political necessity; and while peace has been preserved and the empire secured, the discontents of the past, the pres-

ent, and the future, may now be dexterously rallied to a general attack. "The special aim," Mr Gladstone says, "of Russian sympathies, has been not wholly but for the most part attained." A new era of discussion has commenced. "The alliance between Russia and the great cause of deliverance is no longer the salient and determining point of the Eastern Question." Public danger has glided into the past, and the time has arrived when the reckless assertions of Opposition will no longer be scanned with a sense of present peril, but with the prejudices born of five years' successful tenure of power.

Yet there are difficulties in the way of Mr Gladstone's crusade which might well daunt a man less confident in his use of tongue and pen. He actually undertakes to pose before the British public, after all he has said and done during the last three years, as the unflinching representative of its traditional enmity to Russia, the man who would have compelled fulfilment of all its humanitarian pretexts, and would have sternly refused to her one iota of territorial aggrandisement or political advantage. The British public has been occasionally befooled, but never so grossly as Mr Gladstone now seems willing to gull it. Mr Gladstone's antecedents in reference to this question are all known. In 1854 he joined in plunging this country into war, and has never since been able to explain the reason—the Emperor Nicholas's object then being precisely the same as Prince Gortschakoff's object in 1876. It is true that he starved the war which he began, and in the midst of "horrible and heartrending" disaster, fled from the Cabinet. The next step was to disavow its objects, and clamour for peace, in a manner which, in the Prince Consort's language, "rendered all chance

of obtaining an honourable peace without great sacrifice of blood and treasure impossible, by giving new hopes and spirit to the enemy." Consistently with this conduct, which drew down upon him the severe rebuke of Lord Palmerston, this traditional foe to Russia has incessantly, during the last three years, laboured with all his might to enervate the mind of this country during one of the most critical situations in which it has ever been placed. It is not merely that he hounded Russia on to war with Turkey, and by his inflammatory action, both in England and Russia, played into the hands of those "dangerous classes" whose lust for war he now denounces, but whose action he helped to render irrepressible. It is not merely that at every stage in the progress of the war he sided with Russia, denounced conditional neutrality, and laughed to scorn the notion of any British interests being involved, though twenty years ago he had poured out blood and treasure to prevent even the approach of danger. But at the critical moment, with the Russians at the gates of Constantinople, and on the shores of the Bosphorus, and on the lines of Bulair, he refused the vote of credit, and denounced preparations of self-defence. The same man who ran away from disaster before Sebastopol, who surrendered the Black Sea clause of the Treaty of Paris, after whining to Prince Bismarck before the gates of Paris about "future complications," actually argued in the House of Commons against a limitation of the Russian demands; declared at Oxford that the Russians were working a great deliverance; and plainly hinted that he with their aid, and they with his, had overruled the policy of the English Cabinet. He denounced the advance of the English fleet, and

deprecatd the remotest association of friendly discussion with Russia with the rumour of arms. In his anxiety to rely on that moral influence which consists with an unusual promptitude in showing your heels to an adversary, he well-nigh roused the war passions of this country to an ungovernable pitch.

Such is the man who now desires to pose before the country as the traditional foe to Russia, prepared to argue that a lofty disregard for British interests is the only way to insure "the fairest prospects of humanity;" that the great international settlement of the South-east was not worth preserving, in comparison with the accomplishment of the Czar's beneficent designs; that the Treaty of Berlin was worthless, as regards Great Britain, when compared with the cession of Kars, Batoum, and Bessarabia.

With such a leader, and such an opportunity, let us examine more closely the nature of the attempt, and the process by which anti-Russianism is combined with severe condemnation of the Ministry; applause of Russian aggression, with censure of the slightest British concession; and the admitted improvement in the condition of the subject-races under the Treaty of Berlin, with Tory resistance to the progress of freedom.

The first discussion is in reference to the horrors of Russianism. Before Russia "emerged from her despotic institutions"—a circumstance in her history to which no date is or can be assigned—she was the head of European Toryism; and "except in cases of pure exception, she has uniformly and habitually ranged in European politics with the antagonists of freedom." The chain of evil tradition, he says, has never been broken by a personal

change in the occupancy of the throne, but it has secured the sympathy of Toryism. To illustrate this preternatural and wholly depraved passion for Russianism which distinguishes the Tory party, our readers will be glad to learn that "nothing can be more to the point" than Lord Beaconsfield's proposal in 1870, that Russia and England should come to an understanding so as to restore peace and avert the horrors of war between France and Germany. If that suggestion is the strongest proof which Mr Gladstone can adduce of Tory sympathy with the vices of Russianism, and its readiness to co-operate with her in every evil design, we might help him to a still more striking instance. In 1875, when another Franco-German war was imminent—but when, fortunately for the interests of European peace, Mr Disraeli, and not Mr Gladstone, was at the head of the English Government—a Russian understanding was not merely suggested, but actually arrived at and carried into effect. The consequence was that peace was preserved, England and Russia sharing in the credit—the one silently and unobtrusively, the other noisily, with a view to increase of *prestige*, and with short-sighted disregard of German susceptibilities.

But how comes it that a Power which is the habitual antagonist of freedom, and with which it is an act of political depravity even on the part of Tories in the least degree to sympathise, became, all of a sudden, contrary to its usual instincts, the disinterested champion of freedom against oppression, the great liberator of foreign races and nations? In his invective against the *quondam* ally of Toryism, it was necessary to hedge a little, remembering the recent ally of Liberalism; and accordingly, Mr Glad-

stone provided for himself two loopholes of escape—one a mysterious reference to Russian emergence from despotic institutions, the other a dry hint at some few cases of pure exception to the general course of Russian policy and history. Let us examine these loopholes by the light of considerations drawn from within the four corners of Mr Gladstone's article. The theory (if it is seriously urged) that Russia has emerged from despotic institutions, and is therefore entitled to the allegiance of the free, won't hold good for a single moment. In the first place, no one ever heard of it before. In the second place, Mr Gladstone neither says when nor how it occurred; and if he is satisfied with the degree of this emergence, his evidence would be, *ipso facto*, stamped as that of a reprobate Tory of the darkest type, and therefore inadmissible. In the third place, he complains that even down to the Treaty of Berlin "it was left to the *despot* to perform the duty of the free" (p. 172); her "return to her old vocation in European politics" is still imminent (p. 174); it is a crying grievance that she has replaced Bessarabia under *despotic* institutions (p. 176); she still acts with "gross and tyrannous ingratitude," and enters into conspiracies against freedom (p. 178). It is clear, therefore, that on Mr Gladstone's own showing, Russia has not yet turned over a new leaf in the history of her national life. The sow that was washed for the purposes of Liberalism is still found wallowing in the mire; the old Adam of despotism is too strong for the new-born champion of freedom.

Then, was her recent championship all that is good and great, and virtuous and free, a "pure exception" in her general course of political conduct? If so, what were its distinguishing characteristics? why

was England suddenly to place in her unbounded confidence, and in full assurance of the rectitude of her intentions, join in rolling up the Treaty of Paris, and the Ottoman empire along with it? This habitual antagonist of freedom waged war, according to Mr Gladstone, to confer freedom and liberate from oppression; and that sacred cause insured to her the sympathies of British Liberals. Austria, we are told (see p. 192), "unlike Russia, has perhaps never once been led astray by any accident into sympathy with external freedom." It would seem from this that the "pure exception" was after all only an accident, which justified—having regard to all the antecedents—a certain amount of care and circumspection on the part of those who had to deal with it; more particularly as at the outset Russia was in close alliance with this very Austria and Germany to the exclusion of England. In proportion as the alleged exception runs counter, on Mr Gladstone's own showing, to Russia's past history, a portion of her present conduct, and to her probable future, it was incumbent on him to prove his case. He defends the alliance of the three Emperors, and calls it a European concert. Till England interfered and broke it up, Russia, with the countenance of Austria, was diffusing all around her the blessings of freedom. To remove all suspicion of improbability, he appeals to the Czar, and says that his emancipation of the serfs was a triumph of peaceful legislation; that his assurances about Khiva implied an honourable anxiety for the friendship of England; that his resort to force, in violation of those assurances, had "every appearance of reason and justice." As is the Czar, so are the people. But the spirit of aggression, he admits, animates the oli-

garchic, diplomatic, and military class, which stands between the Czar and his people, and works day and night for its own ends, which are dangerous as regards the rights of other countries and the peace of the world. This scarcely raises a presumption in favour of Russian aggression being in this instance, contrary to all past experience, humane and generous. Twenty years ago she admittedly "struggled for the power of arbitrary interference, and not for the relief of the oppressed." What was there in the recent proceedings to distinguish them from her usual and well-known course of intrigue, pretexts of oppression, conquest, annexation? The only answer apparently is that, "in 1876, she was content to work as a member of the European family, in strict concert with its other members," and that owing to England she was left to act alone. That is to say, she was quite willing to act with Europe till Europe disapproved invasion and violence; and then she acted in spite of Europe, and in opposition to Europe. Moreover, until England interfered—France being temporarily effaced and Germany quiescent—she was acting chiefly in concert with Austria, who is never, he says, by any accident on the side of freedom. From first to last—from the encouragement given to Bosnian revolt and Servian invasion, down to the peace of San Stefano—there was not a step taken which was not in violation of treaties which she was bound to respect. Under the influence of England, the European concert was preserved as regards all peaceable intervention; the English Government even sanctioned the protocols of the Constantinople Conference. Russia and Turkey stepped outside the European concert to fight out the war which

Russia had rendered inevitable. The subject-races were the pretext and the sufferers. For England to have joined with Russia, as Mr Gladstone wanted, would have been to convulse the world.

The "pure exception," however, arose in this instance because "the sympathies of religion and race traversed the ordinary action of the instincts of power." But those sympathies, unluckily for the argument, existed as strongly at the time of the Crimean war as now. Mr Gladstone's unfortunate antecedents compel him to uphold the national indignation at that Russian aggression as "noble;" for in resistance to such an outrage "there was little to stir up the baser elements of our nature." In either case, apparently, the British interests involved were phantom interests, no less fictitious than obtrusive. But in the one case there was the arbitrary and overbearing temper of Nicholas, and in the other the strong humanity of Alexander; and Mr Gladstone apparently believes that English blood and treasure might belavishly poured forth, first on oneside, and then on the other, without the slightest regard, in either case, to British interests or the faith of treaties, but simply on vague sentimental considerations founded on the personal characteristics of the Czar. The fact is, that no case whatever is made out in favour of the "pure exception" theory. We should never have heard of it but for the necessity, which still stares Mr Gladstone in the face, of endeavouring to justify his Bulgarian agitation before his party, his country, and posterity, and in spite of every sentiment which on the face of this article should animate an English statesman in his dealings with Russia.

The great indictment against the Tory party is, that in the recent

controversy they throughout preferred phantom and incomprehensible British interests, to helping Russia in her accidental and purely exceptional zeal in furthering the work of liberation and the cause of the oppressed. "Only foul waters," he says, "could flow from a source so polluted." Let us therefore examine these foul waters with the aid of Mr Gladstone's article. They will be found to be pure and bright when the object is to depict the benefits which flow from Russian chivalry and zeal for freedom; black when they are befouled by the pernicious influences which were born of attention to British interests. Standing on the vantage-ground of Russian zeal for human happiness and freedom, especially on the borders of her empire and amongst the subjects of a neighbouring sovereign, he looks back upon the past. In his melancholy retrospect there is no action of Russia which the English Government has resisted which was not disinterested and noble; and wherever concession was made, even that was not right, for it was by no means in furtherance of Russian beneficence, still less because equivalents—without war, and with due regard to British interests—were found elsewhere; but it was concession founded on a base "conspiracy with her against freedom."

It seems so utterly incredible that an English statesman should write in this way—one who has actually held the office of Prime Minister, and who has joined with Lord Palmerston and other statesmen of the highest eminence in declaring war against this very Power to repel its traditional designs on precisely the same theatre of action—that having drawn attention to it, we must lay before our readers a sample of his accusations. They relate to British action in

reference to Russia during the progress of the recent controversy, and to British action in negotiating the Treaty of Berlin. The general result is that "British Tories" resisted, for their own party purposes and gain, a great work of deliverance, offering to the accidental and purely exceptional humanity of its author an unprincipled resistance, now and then streaked with a dangerous intimacy whenever Russia, forgetful of her high mission, was willing to conspire with them against the cause of freedom, which she had so recently, and in a manner so contrary to all her instincts and antecedents, made her own.

According to this jaundiced view of public affairs, the motives of her Majesty's Ministers were as base as their conduct was inhuman. They assumed the mask of nationality as a mere "trick of party." They did so in order to disintegrate the ranks of their opponents, by "filching and appropriating the national credit;" and this is represented as a safe calculation. Besides the desire of disintegrating the Liberal ranks, they wished to discredit the cause of freedom and humanity in the East. No sooner did Russia stand in a sympathetic relation to that cause, than her Majesty's Ministers immediately discovered that she was the best "phlogistic" they could find, so as to enable them to execute their profitable trick. Accordingly they at once threw the Christian cause into the hands of Russia, their followers raising no objection—for when did Tories ever speak a word for freedom?)—and then, because the hands were Russian, they reviled all who supported them as "in some special and guilty sense the friends of Russia. "The great Russian *bogie* was purchased, and exhibited at every fair in the country."

This will not strike our readers as very felicitous or finished invective; it is that coarse type of abuse which might be relegated to some of the lower emissaries of a Birmingham caucus, rather than deliberately written by a statesman of the highest eminence in a high-class periodical.

The Christian cause having thus been designedly thrown into Russian hands, in order that the British Tories might execute their profitable trick of party in assuming the mask of nationality, how did the Christian cause fare? Russia struggled for the relief of the oppressed; she sought to act in strict concert with Europe. England broke up that concert, "baffled and befooled every joint movement," forced the "despot" to act alone in performing the duty of the free. Liberalism, of course, could not join in such an unprincipled game as that, nor desire that the subject-races of Turkey should remain debased by servitude. It must be satisfactory, therefore, to all true patriots to learn, that although Russia was forced by British Tories to resort to "arms and blood," yet thanks to the wise sympathy and aid of Liberalism, she did eventually attain the end of all her sympathies. Still the success was not wholly without alloy; for Tory friendship is so managed as to injure friends, and Tory enmity serves the purposes of its foes. And as Russian enthusiasm for freedom, notwithstanding Mr Gladstone's evident sympathy with it, is still a thing of a very fluctuating character, with a constant tendency to relapse into a taste for oppression and despotism, Toryism had a fine scope for its energies, and so conducted itself as to play into Russia's hands wherever she was Freedom's enemy, "in order that she might be made to lose where she was Freedom's friend."

The manner in which Mr Gladstone manages this part of his case is the least adroit of his whole article. We have noticed several imminent falls whilst he was traversing a different end of the political tight-rope. It was no easy matter so to demonstrate this "pure exception" as to account for the traditional opponent of Russia becoming, during an interval of three years, her wayward and uncompromising friend, prepared to sacrifice to that friendship, regardless of Crimean memories, all British interests of whatsoever kind, and to welcome the Cossack in Constantinople and on the Bosphorus. The difficulty is increased tenfold when it appears that the "pure exception" itself must, after all this uncompromising conduct, be fenced and guarded with counter-exceptions, during which Toryism relapsed into its depraved friendship and peculiar intimacy, but Liberalism did not resume its sturdy and indignant enmity. The outcome of Russia's beneficent efforts was, it seems, a mixture of good and evil, during which Toryism resisted the good, but willingly gave place to the evil; but Liberalism, we fear, on its own showing, deliberately befriended both.

Let us follow Mr Gladstone a little more closely along his very tortuous and intricate path through that maze of complicated difficulties to which his argument and his passions have brought him. The first endeavour is to place before the reader in glowing colours the philanthropic triumphs of Russia, in spite of all the efforts of those who "are at once the opponents of reform at home, and the main disturbers of the general peace." And accordingly we read as follows: "The Slavonic provinces of Turkey are now, through the efforts and sacrifices of a single nation, independent, like Servia and Montenegro; or tri-

butary, like Bulgaria; or at the very least autonomous, with a more ambiguous freedom, like Eastern Roumelia. The work of deliverance has been in the main accomplished. . . . Lands and races which England refused to liberate are free." During all the time that the accomplishment of this special purpose was being effected—while Russia was, contrary to her wont, breaking chains instead of forging them—British Toryism, with a certainty of instinct, entered the lists against her; brought phantom interests of England into the field; and under this double influence of hostility to freedom, and of a profitable party manœuvre, attained to a high degree of patriotic violence. The Tories "undertook for this occasion the rôle of enemies of Russia." They accordingly affronted her Government and estranged her people. They excited amongst the people of this country "a fierce and almost savage antipathy," exceeding that which obtained "during the Crimean war itself." This is what they did. "They limited the belligerent rights of the Russian State by marking off Egypt as a land consecrated to British interests, which was to make war against Russia, but upon which she might not make war in return." Then there was the Russian promise not to invade Constantinople,—a promise which Mr Gladstone seems to regard in the same light as the promises about Khiva—viz., as evincing an honourable anxiety to secure the friendship of England. Possibly the Ministry regarded the Czar's hope of fulfilling it in the same light as Mr Gladstone, after the event, regarded the Khiva promise—viz., as "an over-sanguine expectation." Had the Russians broken their promise and resorted to forcible invasion, we know exactly what Mr Gladstone would

have thought of it. He would have protested, as in the Khiva case, against treating, "as an act of bad faith, a resort to force which has every appearance of reason and of justice." He accordingly denounces the Ministry for answering that promise not to invade Constantinople "by sending a fleet into its neighbourhood." The Ministry flourished in the face of the Czar "the menace of their Indian troops at Malta,"—a misleading stratagem, intended "to inspire the perfectly untrue belief that our Indian army could be withdrawn from India," to strengthen them in giving effect "to their Turkish and anti-Liberal propensities at Berlin, which they embellished with the misused name of British interests."

The effect of all this hostility was, however, quite powerless to arrest the onward course of Russian successes. Not merely did the cause of humanity and freedom flourish, as stated above, but Russia also obtained for herself Kars, Batoum, and Bessarabia. Not a word is stated as to Russia being compelled to quit Constantinople, the Bosphorus, the Dardanelles, and the Ægean, and retire behind the Balkans. Of all that, Mr Gladstone's article, and Liberal criticism generally, is silent as the grave. The circumstance that war was avoided in spite of a more "savage antipathy" than that which drove Mr Gladstone headlong and with unreflecting ardour into the Crimean struggle, and a successful Russian aggression rolled back without firing a shot, but at the cost of Kars, Batoum, and Bessarabia, more than balanced by concessions to Austria and England, is passed over without a word. The cession is traced, notwithstanding the hatred and hostility imputed, to "acts of association so close and suspicious, that nothing less than a large unexhausted stock of re-

putation as good Russia-haters could have made it safe to venture on them." The result, as we must remind our readers, of this suspicious act of association, was that Russia, for the advantage of being allowed to retain this infinitesimal residue of her conquests, which neither policy nor justice required us to wrench from her by force, consented publicly to re-enter the European concert, submit the Treaty of San Stefano to a Congress, and abide by its decisions. On Mr Gladstone's own admission, in a many-headed negotiation the Government "must give here that it may take there." Yet he considers it part of an honest criticism to preserve absolute silence as to all the sacrifices peacefully imposed upon a victorious nation, and, at the same time, to inveigh against the cession of Kars, Batoum, and Bessarabia, and to impute in the latter case, that "the cause of liberty was abandoned in Roumania, in order that it might be defeated in South Bulgaria." The imputation is so grossly improbable, impossible, and untrue, that to indulge in it was a piece of flippancy which stamps the whole indictment as absurd. Every one knows that Roumania was the ally or tool of Russia in her unprincipled aggression; that she went to war with her suzerain without being able even to allege a grievance. That the aggressors quarrelled after the victory was won, and that Roumania in that quarrel went to the wall, was only what might have been expected. England had nothing to do with the cession of Bessarabia, except to say that under all the circumstances she could not, whilst Germany and Austria looked on, be expected to struggle against it; more particularly as the territories which war had thrown under the grasp of Russia, and which had to be rescued from her clutches, were

already vast enough, and were the seat of much wider and more immediate British interests. Accordingly, the English Ministers gave Russia to understand that if she entered Congress, adequate concessions, regardless of Bessarabia, would be accepted in the interests of the general peace. Yet Mr Gladstone is not above resorting to the thin, transparent pretext for opposition, which is involved in their acquiescing in Russia retaining the little fishes, whilst the whale was rescued from her grasp. In order to ground a political attack on this transaction, worse inconsistencies than those which we have already noticed are called into play. The disinterested champion of freedom and humanity has to be represented as "the enemy of freedom among the Roumanians, where freedom clashed with her own territorial aggrandisement." And where, on the face of the globe, does not freedom clash with Russian territorial aggrandisement? But for Mr Gladstone's agitation in 1876, the British Government would have been able to prevent aggression, and then Bessarabia would have remained free. It is precisely because that Government is the enemy of Russian territorial aggrandisement that it is the true friend of freedom. It is because Mr Gladstone is the partisan of Russia, for factious purposes at home, that he has been the most dangerous foe to the freedom, the prosperity, and happiness of the subject-races that they possess in the whole of the British dominions. Thus it appears that although Russia was the enemy of freedom in Roumania, at least she was its friend in South Bulgaria—or East Roumelia, as it is now called. But British Toryism is opposed to freedom everywhere and anywhere; and consequently not merely did it connive at the aban-

donment of liberty in Roumania, but stipulated that as the price of doing so, and "*as an equivalent to us, the cause of liberty might be defeated in South Bulgaria.*" And then follows an invective against the fatal results of this piece of gratuitous Tory mischief. Liberty has been triumphed over, not Russia; she is only wounded in the best of her desires and sympathies. "On the scene of the chief Bulgarian horrors, Slav liberation has been hemmed in—has been mutilated." Russian humanity was wounded; we defeated her in what she sought on behalf of oppressed and suffering humanity. We have established sharp contrasts between brethren who dwell on the two sides of the Balkans. On the one side is a Bulgaria substantially free—thanks to Russia; on the other side is a Bulgaria "pining in servitude"—thanks to British Toryism. Alas that it should be so! But let not the British Tory, with his depraved political tastes, his hatred of liberty, and his love of oppression and tyranny, plume himself too hastily on the work of his hands. We advise him to turn to the provisions of the Treaty of Berlin before he indulges in self-congratulation. Or he may await the results of the International Commission. If, however, his patience fails him, he may at least turn back to p. 169 of Mr Gladstone's article, where he will read, when the object is to applaud the triumph of Russian humanity, that so far is East Roumelia or South Bulgaria from "pining in servitude" (owing to the triumphs gained by the armies of the Czar over British Toryism), that all the Slavonic provinces of Turkey are "independent, like Serbia and Montenegro; tributary, like Bulgaria; or at the very least autonomous, with a more ambiguous freedom, like Eastern Rou-

melia. The work of deliverance has been in the main accomplished." Then spreading his wings for the highest flight permitted to fine writing, he piously exclaims: "The cause has now been pleaded, the great Judge has pronounced His sentence; and lands and races which England refused to liberate are free." What a descent from this magniloquent outburst to the vulgar accusation that Eastern Roumelia is still "pining in servitude" because British Tories befriended Russian enmity to freedom in Roumania, and required as an equivalent that the cause of oppression should flourish in Eastern Roumelia! In one or other of these statements Mr Gladstone must indeed have been, as Horace delicately puts it, *splendide mendax*. If Mr Gladstone is sincere in thanking Heaven that, Tories notwithstanding, East Roumelia is free, he is not stating his honest convictions when he declares that East Roumelia is "pining in servitude." We submit that one and the same transaction cannot be in one and the same article piously referred to the will and glory of the "great Judge," and shortly afterwards be factiously turned to the discredit and disgrace of British Toryism.

Another branch of Mr Gladstone's article relates to the Affghan business. This, at all events, stands clear of Russian "thrill of genuine emotion on behalf of their enslaved and suffering brethren," and even of Tory enmity to freedom. The questions which are discussed are the relative conduct of the Indian Government—acting at the impulse and under the direction of her Majesty's Government—on the one hand, and of a half-insane and savage barbarian on the other hand. Need we say that the contrast is wholly to the advantage of the latter? He is absolutely and entirely in the right,

and the conduct of the former exhibits "a pitiless display of might against right." Further, the only explanation of the Government (which for years has been denounced for its warlike spirit) abstaining from hostilities against Russia in Asia as well as in Europe is, that the genuine bully knows well how to crouch before his equal, and in this case has so managed whatever resistance he offers, as to humble Great Britain before Russia. It is an odd picture which Mr Gladstone draws. Down to 1876 all went smoothly. Then came Lord Northbrook's departure from India, the transfer of Indian troops to Malta, and in consequence the direction of Russian troops in Asia, in order "to act on the timid susceptibilities of the British Government, so as to draw it into some false step." In the very next sentence it appears that not much adroitness was required to draw a Tory Government (which is both warlike and timid) into some false step. Russia might have spared herself any trouble on that head. For we read, "The Indian Government, impelled from home, had, ever since the year 1876, been preparing combustible material to which Russia might at pleasure apply the match." The "singular perversity" to which that course of conduct is ascribed is surely sufficient explanation without intruding into the discussion some event which happened in 1878, and some "false step" which it required all the art of guileless Russia to induce.

What with perversity, and what with timid susceptibilities on the part of the British Government, the Ameer of Affghanistan had a fine time of it. "During more than two years he was made the butt of a series of measures alternating between cajolery and intimidation." He was not, however, entirely without blame; for he was like "a spoiled

child," rendered grasping by a sense of our jealousy of his independence, making grievances against us more or less, but without any hostility or "any attempt to make a market of his complaints." He wanted "to get as much as he could out of our good-nature, and to lay greater burdens on the willing horse." But on one point he stood firm, and Mr Gladstone applauds and approves his resolution. He would not admit British officers as Residents into his dominions; nor would he allow to enter his territories "the subjects of a Power which had cruelly and wantonly devastated the country within the memory of many living Affghans."

It would be lost labour, after all that has been said in Parliament and the press, to discuss the real relations of the Ameer to the Indian Government. It sufficiently appears, on Mr Gladstone's own showing, that what the spoiled child really wanted was an unconditional guarantee of his throne, his dynasty, and his territory. Such a guarantee neither Lord Lytton nor any of the previous Viceroy, who were all "fast friends" of the Ameer, would give. The difference between Lord Lytton and his predecessors was, that the latter allowed the spoiled child to hug his grievances, and carry on his intrigues with General Kauffmann, while the former took an early opportunity of coming to a definite understanding, thinking it rank folly to keep up the illusion of possessing an influence which Russia and all concerned knew did not exist, but which at the same time cast upon us responsibility for the Ameer's conduct. The time had come when it must be clearly ascertained whether the Ameer was friend or foe—whether he was to be allowed, in contravention of his treaty with us, and what he knew to be our rights and his duties, to

intrigue with General Kauffmann, and ostentatiously admit Russian envoys where he excluded British representatives. It was evident that no arrangement was possible with the Ameer. He had gone too far in his intrigues with Russia for that to be possible. So he was told that unless he admitted British officers, and enabled England to afford him the protection he formerly solicited, he must stand alone, and no longer invoke the assurances of former Viceroy. This Mr Gladstone calls applying to him an instrument of torture, and actually stigmatises as effrontery on our part the objection to a Russian envoy being admitted while that of England was excluded. The Ameer could not, he says, bid defiance to Russia whilst our support was withdrawn. So he represents the Ameer as cowering and crouching before England, and England crouching before Russia, but prepared to apply the knife of a vivisector to the spoiled child who had affronted it, and who now, "hopeless and helpless, stood utterly aghast." Really this is a very pretty picture all the way round! What there is in it to correspond to the reality need not be discussed. The English army, contrary to every prophecy of the Liberals, has signally triumphed; the Ameer has fled from his dominions; his people have emancipated themselves from his tyranny; and the ex-despot has given out that a Congress of Powers, to be held at St Petersburg, shall adjudicate upon his case. It is unfortunate for him that he cannot refer it to the final arbitrament of Mr Gladstone. He need not then have feared, under the circumstances, a repetition of the Seistan arbitration.

Mr Gladstone, in this case, reserves all his hostility for Russia, to whom Lord Beaconsfield's Government have exhibited an undue and

humiliating submission, and for whom they have "laid open, as far as policy could lay it open, the way through Affghanistan to our Eastern possessions." We believe that English public opinion is far too well informed to be quite so easily misled. Affghanistan has been rapidly brought "within a steadily narrowing circle between two great military empires;" Shere Ali cannot be allowed, even if he were able, to play off one against the other for his own advantage; British Residents on the frontier are a necessary measure of precaution; and as against a hostile Power on the north-west boundary, the frontier line must be rectified. "A mountain-chain," as Lord Napier of Magdala says, "that can be pierced in many places, is no security if you hide behind it. India has been often entered through her mountain-barrier, which was never defended. India waited to fight the battle in her own plains, and invariably lost it." The possibility of Russian hostility, which may be quite as effective through intrigue as through actual invasion, is not denied even by Mr Gladstone. "It was natural enough," he says, "that Russia should prepare to threaten British India through Affghanistan." Political not less than military designs may dictate that step; and whether a British Government is engaged in counteracting Russian policy in Europe, or is subject to all those "timid susceptibilities" to which Mr Gladstone refers, the security of India requires that her frontier should be rendered as safe as an impregnable frontier can make it. British Residents on Affghan borders, and the occupation of strategic positions beyond the present frontier, have become a political necessity, alike for the safety of India, and in order to exclude Russian influence and intrigue from the pro-

ected territory of Affghanistan. The Government have pursued a course which was inevitable, and their success has been rapid and complete.

The next subject which is submitted for the indignant censure of the electors at the next dissolution is the war which the Ministry are said to have made on the Parliament and the Constitution of the country. On this topic Mr Gladstone surely ought to have been freed from all embarrassment. Hitherto there has been a quagmire of difficulties, along which we feel that only a practised traveller could pick his way with safety. How the traditional friends of Russia became transformed into its uncompromising foes; how at the same time Russianism dropped its horrors, and was transformed into the chivalrous liberator from oppression and champion of freedom; how this sudden and complete transformation was itself only a pure but accidental exception to its general history; how the pure exception was itself disfigured by relapses into the normal and natural state peculiar to Russianism; and how, during these relapses, the new-born foes of Russia exchanged their enmity for peculiar intimacy and base conspiracy,—are subjects which have already been treated with great bitterness and a happy disregard of consistency. But we now enter upon a less complicated discussion. It is not surprising that the same men who are the unswerving antagonists of freedom all over the world—whose traditional friendship for Russia is exchanged for savage antipathy the moment she appears before the world as the friend of the oppressed—should also be the sturdy opponents, or at least the secret conspirators, against parliamentary government at home. Accordingly, we read of a war "that

has not been proclaimed, indeed, but established in *this* country—the silent but active war against parliamentary government.” Here, at least, we have reached an accusation which is capable of being stated plainly, and in reference to which there are none of the difficulties that occasioned the self-contradictions and inconsistencies in which the earlier part of this manifesto abounded.

Yet, to our astonishment, in the very next sentence the accusation is completely displaced, and it appears that so far from the Ministry having any occasion to make war upon parliamentary government, that form of government is allowed to be the most effective and convenient instrument, ready to its hands, which it could possibly have desired. On the first blush of it, a Government which calls Parliament together in the middle of January, and then again in the middle of December of the same year; which evidently relies on parliamentary discussion as the best antidote to reckless agitation; and which is accustomed to see its opponents alter their language, withdraw their amendments, and retire from successive divisions, vanquished by increasing majorities,—so far from declaring war on parliamentary government, finds, and shows that it finds, its chief support in parliamentary co-operation and assistance. Translated into Gladstonian language, this combined action of Ministry and Parliament—which the English Constitution contemplates, and was expressly framed to secure—is thus described: “The majority of the present House of Commons has on more than one occasion indicated its readiness to offer up, at the shrine of the Government which it sustains, the most essential rights and privileges of the people.” What occasion is there

for war against parliamentary government on the part of a Cabinet, all whose acts, however distasteful to Mr Gladstone, “have been accepted in Parliament with greedy approval?” No doubt the long and difficult diplomacy of the Government has been conducted, as upon all former occasions, in secret. No doubt the treaty-making and the war-making power of the executive has been exercised, as on all former occasions, without the previous knowledge and consent of Parliament, but, at the same time, in the full assurance that Parliament would afterwards approve it, and with the very earliest demand for parliamentary approval and support, which have been granted by increasing majorities. It is the height of inconsistency to represent Parliament as the enthusiastic accomplice of the Government, displaying an eagerness to be immolated which even an Ameer of Afghanistan failed to show, foregoing their control over war-making and treaty-making powers, their taxing privilege, their legislative power,—and at the same time to represent the Ministry as veiling their conduct “under the cloak of deliberate and careful secrecy, with the evident intention, and even with elaborate contrivance, to exclude the Parliament and the nation from all influence upon the results.” Why that intention, and why that contrivance, when in the next page evidence is offered of the “reciprocal confidence” which the Government reposes in the docility of the majority? The whole indictment is one tissue of absurd inconsistency. Confidence in a man’s docility excludes altogether the notion of its being necessary to overreach him by contrivance, elaborate or otherwise. War upon parliamentary government by a Ministry, all whose acts are accepted with “greedy approval,”

who are upheld by an amount of parliamentary support which does not fall short of parliamentary self-immolation, is a charge which is on the face of it ridiculous. There are surely the most obvious reasons for secrecy and contrivance on the part of the English Government, to be drawn from the recent condition of political affairs both in Europe and in Asia. If the Ministers, in their difficult task of baffling Russian aggression in one quarter of the globe and Russian intrigue in another, had shrunk from acting with secrecy and promptitude, had prated about future complications, and receded from every difficulty till it grew to a mountain on their hands, they would most assuredly not have been rewarded at the hands of a patriotic Parliament with steadily-increasing majorities. It is a new doctrine to lay down that Parliament has a right to share in the responsibility of the Executive. Parliament has a right to have public affairs conducted by those in whom it places confidence, itself to stand free of all responsibility and complicity, so as to be absolutely unfettered when the constitutional opportunity arises of pronouncing judgment on the conduct of a Ministry. It is Mr Gladstone who in reality has been the foe to parliamentary government. Instead of being content with the discharge of his constitutional duties as leader of Opposition, he must needs abandon that position, and assume the part of leader of a powerful agitation out of doors, intended to coerce both Ministry and Parliament. When that scheme signally failed, the result inevitably followed that he lost all influence whatever over the course of Parliament, and has never ceased from vilifying and denouncing it. He sought to refuse the vote of credit, declaring

that no British interests were at stake, and no preparations needful. The House of Commons flung Mr Forster's amendment to the winds, and rallied round the Ministers as the only possible leaders of their country. Parliament has steadily overruled Mr Gladstone's attempts to dictate the foreign policy of the Cabinet, and has confined him, so far as his action in the House was concerned, against his will, to the strictly constitutional task of criticising and condemning it. He will shortly have the privilege of appealing from the verdict of Parliament to the verdict of the constituencies. He will appear before them as a man, all whose actions and policy in reference to this Eastern Question have been repeatedly and decisively condemned by the present House of Commons. The relations between the House and the Ministry have been, as he himself says, those of "reciprocal confidence." The relations between himself and the House have been those of marked enmity and antagonism. According to this article in the 'Nineteenth Century,' the friends and foes of parliamentary government are as difficult to distinguish as the friends and foes of Russia. The laborious efforts which Mr Gladstone makes to put the best face upon it in his appeal to the electors, are as unsuccessful as they are painful, in the one case as in the other. The leader of the Bulgarian agitation can hardly hope to be recognised when he attempts to play the part of the traditional foe to Russia, and the uncompromising friend of that parliamentary government which has so signally defeated all his efforts and manœuvres. Considering the unprecedented character of the Opposition which they have had to deal with — an Opposition which has not contented itself

with criticising, but has endeavoured to thwart and embarrass the foreign policy of their country—reasonable men will place a different construction upon the silence and self-restraint which have marked the conduct of the Ministers. They have relied, as they were constitutionally entitled to do, on the support of Parliament; and with the unstinted confidence reposed in them, they have been able to vanquish difficulties which faction at home did its best to increase.

The progress of the settlement made at Berlin is so completely satisfactory that little doubt remains of a durable and lasting peace amongst the Great Powers; of better government within the European dominions of the Sultan, as prescribed and guaranteed by the treaty—and within the Asiatic dominions, as stipulated for and controlled by Great Britain. The great Eastern Question is in all probability settled for the lifetime of this generation; and if the British Government remains in the hands of firm and capable men, probably for a much longer period. Those who have supported and those who have opposed the Administration which has so triumphantly and peacefully vindicated the interests, the honour, and the policy of England in the East, will very shortly have to submit their conduct for the approval of the constituencies. The supporters of Lord Beaconsfield claim for him, that with patience and tenacity of purpose he upheld the great international charter of South-east Europe which was settled in 1856, and confirmed by Mr Gladstone's Government in 1871. Maintaining a watchful, armed, and conditional neutrality during a sanguinary struggle in territories which are the seat of many British interests of vital importance to the empire, he never-

theless compelled the victorious aggressor, at the cost of not disputing some trifling cessions, to join in reconstructing the Paris Treaty on the same lines as before, with additional guarantees for its permanence, and greater security for the internal tranquillity and good government of the Ottoman empire. The triumphs so won have added a new and glorious chapter to the history of England, have gratified the Powers of Europe, and restored England to her old ascendancy. Peace with honour has been preserved, because difficulties of no ordinary magnitude have been firmly met and patiently overcome.

On the other hand are the supporters of Mr Gladstone; for he remains, from his long pre-eminence and his superiority of energy and talent, the central figure of the Opposition, though he has for four years ceased to be its leader and representative. Their wayward opposition to the Government was combined with an outspoken and active encouragement to Russia in her violent and aggressive course. As was said at the time, they forced the hand of diplomacy, they stimulated the war party of Russia till it was beyond the control of the Czar. They combined a fanatical hatred of the Turk with a blind party animosity towards the English Ministry; and impelled by this twofold passion, they gloated over every Russian victory, and vehemently denied the existence of every British interest. Perish India! they exclaimed; perish every interest of England in the Straits, at Constantinople, in Egypt, along the highway to Persia and the Persian Gulf! perish every tradition of the Foreign Office! They denounced conditional neutrality, they refused the vote of credit, they opposed all warlike preparations, they protested against the Treaty of San Stefano

being submitted to the Congress, and accused the Ministry of being influenced by an unworthy desire of a mere diplomatic triumph. Not merely has their conduct been condemned by increasing majorities in Parliament, and repudiated by the Liberals of every foreign country, but two decisive events must fix the attention of the future historian as containing a complete exposure of the hollowness and falsity of this pro-Russian enthusiasm which Mr Gladstone and his followers mistook for legitimate opposition. The Aylesbury speech of September 1876 rolled back and destroyed their agitation, though not before it had disastrously misled public opinion abroad. Mr Forster's amendment to the vote of credit was abandoned in a panic, which revealed to the Liberal party the falsity of their position, and rendered the Government the undisputed master of the situation. It is impossible for any political movement to receive a more crushing exposure of its absolute insincerity and worthlessness than the movement initiated, with unreflecting passion, by Mr Gladstone's Bulgarian agitation, experienced on those two occasions. The men who were then tried and found wanting in patriotism and public spirit will exercise their ingenuity in vain to escape the censure of history. The Tory Ministry and the Tory party have at least established themselves as the true guardians of British honour and the British empire, whenever difficulties arise which must be met and overcome.

We will briefly recapitulate the glaring inconsistencies which befall even the ablest endeavour to reconcile the conduct of Mr Gladstone and his followers with that subordination of party to patriotism which hitherto has regulated the movements of Opposition on questions of

foreign policy. At the outset, joint action with Russia was demanded, in order to extinguish Turkish authority in three important provinces, and rescue the Christian population from Turkish misgovernment. At the close, to abstain from resisting the cession of Kars, Batoum, and Bessarabia, is a stain upon our honour—an anti-national course; while to stipulate for good government in Asia Minor, and the right of supervision in return for protection, is an act of insanity. To oppose Russian aggression, or even to prepare for intervention in case British interests are infringed, is to drag the country into an unjust and unnecessary—or, to use the favourite term, an unholy—war. When the flood of successful aggression has spent itself, and it remains for Europe to roll it back as she can, it is a violation of our traditions, and a stain upon our honour, to allow Russia to retain even a trifling residue of her conquests. That she has been thrust back again behind the Balkans is nothing; for it is “with the direct assistance of the British Government” that she is again a River State. This from the men who refused the vote of credit, and denounced hostile preparations when Russia was on the Bosphorus and at the gates of Constantinople, and had concluded a treaty by which she practically absorbed the larger portion of the European dominions of the Sultan! That under such circumstances the victor has been made to disgorge his conquests is nothing; that he should retain the slightest residue of them is a high crime in the eyes of the warlike statesman who publicly argued that Russia's demands after her victory must not be limited to declarations made before the war. To defend the integrity of the Sultan's dominions was at one time denounced as a war for the protection of Sodom,

to furnish our ally with the victims of his hideous lusts. To consent to the slightest dismemberment of that empire after a disastrous war, even though it be accompanied by firmer guarantees for the internal tranquillity and outward security of the remainder, is equally outrageous. The Treaty of Paris, to which the Ministers tenaciously adhered, was ridiculed and denounced as obsolete. The settlement at Berlin is now decried as having robbed us of all those advantages which we gained in 1856, because in the general remodelling occasioned by the war some modification was inevitable in the interests of the general peace. At one time the British Government is recklessly goading on the country to war; at another it truckles to Russia; its timidity in regard to the Affghan Mission knows no limit. At one time Russia is the disinterested champion of the oppressed; at another she is a conspirator against freedom. The condition of East Roumelia verifies both charges; for it is capable of being represented as substantially free for the one purpose, and as "pining in servitude" for the other.

The mere statement of these inconsistencies is sufficient to convict the authors of them of insincerity and of the most reckless disregard of the public interests. And how do they come to be involved in them? By the attempt, as impossible of execution as it is wild and improbable in conception, to represent a small body of noblemen and gentlemen who form the Cabinet of the Queen as engaged throughout those long and arduous transactions in tricking public opinion under the mask of nationality, with a calculating eye to party profit? When that taunt has served its turn, another appears; and the mere fact that the new imputation displaces

and excludes the other is apparently no objection to it. It is, that since the peace of 1815 the depraved sympathies of British Toryism have steadily gravitated to the side of Russia, except on those rare occasions when Russia is on the side of Liberalism, when, with equal certainty of instinct, British Toryism has entered the lists against her. Blind instincts of this kind are incompatible with the Mephistophelian calculations of party trickery. To trace the alternations of Russia between good and evil, and the corresponding machinations of the English Ministers, now wounding Russia "in the best of her desires and sympathies," now promoting Russian aggrandisement;—at one time balking and defeating her in what she sought on behalf of oppressed and suffering humanity, at another time effectually helping her to wound our own pride and honour,—to trace all this is to Mr Gladstone a labour of love. The impossible picture is presented to us of the traditionary friends of Russia blindly, but with a keen eye to party profit, engaged in the most crooked interlacing of enmity and friendship with Russia, according as she defends the cause of freedom or oppression; whilst her traditionary foes, the single-minded and virtuous followers of Mr Gladstone, support and applaud every aggressive act, oppose and bitterly condemn every attempt at opposition to her, but rail at her retention of the smallest fruits of her victory. The whole of this extraordinary episode in the history of Opposition dealings with foreign policy, as well as the yet more extraordinary mode in which it is attempted to be justified, betray considerable contempt for English public opinion. It is impossible to suppose that the sturdy honesty and straightforwardness of English constituencies can be suc-

cessfully cajoled by these tortuous explanations. Many were heard to argue that the Government ought to have dissolved immediately after the Treaty of Berlin, so as to allow the nation to express at the polling-booths its triumphant satisfaction with the settlement then made—its pride at the accomplishment of peace with honour. We cannot think that such a course would have corresponded to the dignity of the Government. It would have been at the best a mere servile imitation of the attempt to snatch a favourable verdict from the constituencies which in 1874 covered Mr Gladstone with defeat, mortification, and discredit. It is a far wiser and more manly course to guide the country safely through all the difficulties of carrying into effect the Berlin Settlement, and of that adjustment of our Affghan relations which the later development of the Eastern Question showed to be inevitable, and then to await the national decision, confident that, in an age

of free discussion, misrepresentation, calumny, and factious extravagance cannot ultimately prevail. To have maintained the international character of the settlement of the Ottoman empire ; to have vindicated European treaties and British interests against the utmost efforts of Russia ; to have compelled the victorious aggressor to re-enter a European Congress, and to submit to a European remodelling of an empire which he had overthrown ; and to have at the same time preserved peace abroad, and commanded general confidence at home,—are achievements of the very highest order, rarely paralleled in English history, and which England will not speedily forget. The policy so pursued will be the guide of the future ; and the new charter of South-east Europe will be maintained long after the miserable detractions of the last three years have been forgotten, and their authors allowed perhaps to redeem them by pleading their previous reputations.

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PICKING UP THE PIECES : A COMEDY.

It is morning in MRS MELTON'S apartment in Florence. All the furniture is gathered into the middle of the room, and covered with a sheet. MRS MELTON is a widow and no longer young. LORD DAWLISH, who comes to call, has also forgotten his youth.

Dawlish. Good morning, Mrs Melton. I hope—— Holloa! There is nobody here. What is all this about?

(After some consideration he proceeds to investigate the extraordinary erection with the point of his stick. After convincing himself of its nature he lifts a side of the sheet, pulls out an easy-chair, inspects it, and finally sits on it.)

She is an extraordinary woman. I don't know why I like her. I don't know why she likes me. I suppose that she does like me. If not, what a bore I must be! I come here every day—and stay. I suspect that I am an awful fellow to stay. I suppose I ought to go now. This furniture trophy don't look like being at home to callers. But perhaps she is out: and then I can go on sitting here. I must sit somewhere. May I smoke? I daresay: thank ye, I will. Smoke? Smoke. There is a proverb about smoke. I wonder how I came to know so

many proverbs. I don't know much. "There is no smoke without fire." Yes, that's it. There is uncommon little fire in a cigarette. Little fire and much smoke. Yes, that's like this—— I mean—— Let me—— what d'ye call it?—review my position. Here I sit. Here I sit every day. That is, smoke, I suppose—plenty of smoke. Is there any fire? That is the question. I wish people would mind their own business. It is trouble enough to mind one's own business, I should think. But yet there are people—there's that Flitterly, for instance—damned little snob. Flitterly makes it the business of his life to go about saying that I am going to be married; and all because here is a woman who is not such an intolerable bore as—as other people. Flitterly is the sort of man who says that there is no smoke without fire. What is this? That is what I want to know. Is this business of mine all smoke, all cigarette and soda, or—confound

Flitterly! I wonder if I ought to pull his nose. I am afraid that that sort of thing is out of date. I don't think I could pull a nose, unless somebody showed me how. Perhaps if somebody held him steady, I might. I don't think I could do it. He has got such a ridiculous little nose. I wonder if I ought to give up coming here. I don't know where I should go to. I wonder if I am bound in honour, and all that. Perhaps that is out of date too. I sometimes think that I am out of date myself. (*After this he fishes under the sheet with his stick, and brings to light a photograph-book, which he studies as he continues to meditate.*)

I wonder if she would take me if I asked her. I don't believe she would: she is a most extraordinary woman. Who is this, I wonder? I never saw this book before. I suppose that this is the sort of man women admire. He would know how to pull a nose. I daresay he has pulled lots of noses in his day. Does it for exercise. Suburban cad. A kind of little Tooting lady-killer. I wonder she puts such a fellow in her book. Why, here he is again, twice as big and fiercer. Here is another — and another. Hang him, he is all over the book.

(*He pitches the book under the sheet. Then MRS MELTON comes in wearing a large apron, and armed with duster and feather-brush.*)

Mrs Melton. Lord Dawlish! What are you doing here?

D. Nothing.

Mrs M. How well you do it!

D. Thank you.

Mrs M. But you are doing something: you are smoking.

D. Am I? I beg your pardon.

Mrs M. And you shall do more: you shall help me. I have been up to my eyes in work since seven o'clock.

D. Seven! Why don't you make somebody else do it?

Mrs M. Because I do it so well. I have a genius for dusting, and Italian servants have not. In this old city they have an unfeigned respect for the dust of ages.

D. Have they? How funny! But they might help you, I should think. Where are they? There was nobody to let me in. Where are your servants?

Mrs M. Gone.

D. Gone!

Mrs M. Gone and left me free. I packed them all off — man and maid, bag and baggage.

D. But who will look after you?

Mrs M. I. I am fully equal to the task. But come, be useful. You shall help me to rearrange the furniture.

D. Help! I!

Mrs M. Yes, help! You! I am not quite sure that you can't.

(*As he proceeds to brush the back of a chair with a feather-brush, it occurs to him to apologise for his intrusion.*)

D. I suppose I ought to apologise for coming so early. Somehow I found myself in the Palazzo — and the door of your apartments was open, and so I came in. I took the liberty of an old friend.

Mrs M. I believe we have been acquainted for at least a month.

D. Only a month! It is not possible. It must be more than a month.

Mrs M. Apparently our precious friendship has not made the time pass quickly.

D. No. I mean that it never does pass quickly.

Mrs M. Work, work, work! It's work that makes the day go quick. I am busy from morning till night, and time flies with me.

D. Then you shorten your life.

Mrs M. And keep it bright. Better one hour of life than a century of existence! Dear, dear! how did my best photograph-book get knocked down here?

D. I am afraid that that was my awkwardness. I was looking at it, and it—it went down there.

Mrs M. Don't let it break from you again. Here, take it, and sit down and be good. You have no genius for dusting.

D. Nobody ever called me a genius. I have been called all sorts of names; but nobody ever went so far as to call me a genius.

Mrs M. And yet you ain't stupid. I always maintain that you are not really stupid.

D. Ain't I? Thank you. Who is this man—this fine-looking man with the frown and whiskers?

Mrs M. He is handsome, isn't he?

D. I don't know. I am not a judge of male beauty.

Mrs M. Men never admire each other. They are too envious and too vain.

D. Are they? And women? What are women?

Mrs M. What are women? What are they not? Oh for one word to comprehend the sex! Women are—yes, women are womanly.

D. That sounds true. And women are effeminate.

Mrs M. Only females are effeminate.

D. Oh! I wonder what that means.

Mrs M. But John is handsome. Ask any woman.

D. John!

Mrs M. Yes, that's John—my cousin.

D. I hate cousins. They are so familiar and so personal.

Mrs M. I like them. They are so—so—

D. Cousinly.

Mrs M. Precisely.

D. Cousins are cousinly. Does he dye his whiskers?

Mrs M. Dye! Never. He has too much to do. John is a great man—a man of will, a man of

force, a man of iron. That's what I call a man.

D. Do you? I don't call an iron man a man.

Mrs M. He is the first of American engineers.

D. A Yankee stoker.

Mrs M. Dear John! He is a good fellow. He gave me that little jar by your hand.

D. Dear John is not a judge of china. I always hated that little jar. I shall break it some day.

Mrs M. If you do, I'll never speak to you again.

D. Please do. Tell me some more about John. Has not he got a fault, not even a little one?

Mrs M. He has the fault of all men—vanity. He knows that he is handsome.

D. I thought he dyed his whiskers.

Mrs M. He does not dye his whiskers.

D. You seem very keen about the whiskers. Here they are in all sizes, and from all over the world—*carte-de-visite* whiskers, cabinet whiskers, Rembrandt-effect whiskers, whiskers from Naples, from New York, from Baker Street. You must like them very much.

Mrs M. I like the man. I like self-respect, bravery, and perseverance. I like honest work. Oh, Lord Dawlish, what a shame it is that you don't do something!

D. Do something? I? I do do something. I—well, I go about.

Mrs M. Oh! you go about.

D. Yes—with a dog in England; without a dog abroad.

Mrs M. Oh! abroad without a dog. I regret that I shall never have the pleasure of receiving the cur.

D. The cur's a collie.

Mrs M. And so you think that man fulfils his destiny by going about.

D. Somebody must go about, you know.

Mrs M. Yes, a squirrel in a cage. What you want is work. You ought to take a line.

D. Go fishing?

Mrs M. Be serious, and listen to me. Here you are in Florence.

D. I believe I am.

Mrs M. You are in the midst of priceless treasures. The finest works of art are all around you.

D. I believe they are.

Mrs M. Take a line: take up something, for instance the Greek statues.

D. Ain't I rather old to play with marbles?

Mrs M. Not a bit. Nobody is old who isn't old on purpose. Compare, classify, and make a book, or even a pamphlet.

D. I hate pamphlets. They are always coming by the post.

Mrs M. I suppose it's not the thing for a man in your position to turn author.

D. I don't think I ever did hear of one of our lot writing books. But that don't much matter. I should like to take a line, or a course, or a—I took a course of waters once at Homburg, or Kissingen, or somewhere; but they came to an end, like other things.

Mrs M. Lord Dawlish, are you joking?

D. No.

Mrs M. Then be serious: take up a subject; set to work; produce your pamphlet—at least a pamphlet. It might grow into a book.

D. Heaven forbid! I could not do it.

Mrs M. Why not?

D. Writing a book is so infernally public. I should be talked about.

Mrs M. How dreadful! The owl, who is modest withal, and shrinks from notoriety, remains at home until sunset.

D. You called me a squirrel before. Are you going through all the zoological what-d'ye-call-'em?

Mrs M. Perhaps even I shall be talked about before long.

D. I should not wonder if you were.

Mrs M. Yes, even I, humble individual as I am, may perhaps be talked about when I set up my studio.

D. Your what?

Mrs M. My studio. Yes, I've quite made up my mind. There are many worse painters in Florence than myself. I mean to be a real painter, and no longer play with colour.

D. And sell your pictures?

Mrs M. For the largest possible prices.

D. Is not that an odd sort of thing for a lady?

Mrs M. No. We have changed all that. Many women paint nowadays.

D. I have heard so.

Mrs M. I believe that you are making jokes this morning.

D. I don't think so. I don't like jokes; they are very fatiguing. It's John's fault.

Mrs M. What's John's fault?

D. No man likes to have another crammed down his throat—unless he is a confounded cannibal.

Mrs M. Very well. I will refrain from cramming anybody down your throat. But I won't let you off. I feel that I have a mission.

D. Good heavens!

Mrs M. I have a mission to reform you.

D. Please don't do it.

Mrs M. I must. Why don't you do your proper work? Why not go back to England and take care of your property?

D. Because my agent takes care of it so much better than I could. I inherited my place, and I can't get rid of it. But, luckily, land can't follow me about. That is why I come abroad.

Mrs M. Without the dog.

D. He stays with the land. He likes it. He hates travelling.

Mrs M. So would you if you travelled in a dog-box.

D. I wish you would not talk about me. I am so tired of myself.

Mrs M. But you interest me.

D. Thank you. That is gratifying. Don't let us pursue the subject further.

Mrs M. I must. It's my mission. I picture the pleasures of an English country life. You build cottages; you drain fields; you carry flannel to the old women.

D. No; I could not do it. I don't think I could carry flannel to an old woman.

Mrs M. So much for duties. Then for amusement. Are you fond of shooting?

D. Pheasants are all so much alike. I gave up shooting when my sister took to it.

Mrs M. Your sister!

D. She is a keen sportsman—awfully keen. I went out with her once. I feel them still sometimes in my back when it's cold weather.

Mrs M. You like hunting better? In this country they shoot the fox.

D. Do they? That must be curious. I wonder if I could bring myself to try that. I almost think that—

Mrs M. Go home and hunt.

D. I have given up hunting. Rather rough on Teddie, don't you think?

Mrs M. Who's Teddie?

D. Don't you know Teddie?

Mrs M. Is he the dog?

D. No; he is my brother. I thought that everybody knew Teddie. Teddie knows everybody. Teddie likes me to hunt. He is always bothering me to buy horses—with tricks. Or to go by excursion trains. Or to shoot lions in Abyssinia. He is an awfully ambitious fellow, Teddie. Don't you think we might change the subject?

Mrs M. Not yet. I have not done my duty yet. Politics! Oh for political influence! Oh for power! Why, you must be—of course you are a—thingummy what's-his-name.

D. Very likely, if you say so.

Mrs M. An hereditary legislator. Think of that. Think of your influence in the country; of the power you might wield. Go in for politics.

D. Well, you know, I—I inherited my politics with my place, and I can't get rid of them. But Teddie does them for me. He was always rather a muff, Teddie was; and so they put him into politics.

Mrs M. Are there muffs in your family? But don't interrupt me. I must have the last word. Anything else I will give up, but the last word—never. In your position you must sway something. If you won't sway the country, sway the county; if you won't sway the county, sway a vestry, a workhouse, a something, or anything. Only do something. You would be a great deal happier, and—I don't know why I should be afraid to say—a great deal better, if you would only do something.

D. You forget that I am delicate. The doctors say I am delicate, and that is why I come abroad. I do wish you would change the subject. It is a delicate subject, you know.

Mrs M. Again! You have only one malady—idleness.

D. No, no, no! All the doctors.

Mrs M. Quacks!

D. As you please. But I have not the rude health of some strong-minded women.

Mrs M. Nor I the rude manners of some weak-minded men. But I beg your pardon; I won't be rude.

D. Was I rude? I am awfully sorry. I beg your pardon. But I am so tired of myself.

Mrs M. Then work—work and be cured. Do something—anything. A stitch in time saves nine.

D. Oh, if you come to proverbs—Look before you leap.

Mrs M. Procrastination is the thief of time.

D. More haste less speed. If one does nothing, at least one does no harm.

Mrs M. Nor does a stuffed poodle.

D. Another beast! I have been a squirrel and an owl. And after all, I did not come here to talk about myself, nor poodles.

Mrs M. Did you come to speak of the weather?

D. I wanted to speak about you.

Mrs M. About me! Here's a turning of the tables.

D. May I?

Mrs M. If you have energy for so lively a topic.

D. May I speak plainly, as an old friend?

Mrs M. As a month-old friend. Speak plainly by all means. I've a passion for plain speaking.

D. It is an uncommonly disagreeable subject.

Mrs M. Thank you. You were going to talk about me.

D. I don't mean that; of course not. It does not matter whether I talk about you or not. But there are other people here who talk about you.

Mrs M. Talk about me? What do they say?

D. They say things I don't like; so I thought that I——

Mrs M. Thank you, Lord Dawlish; but I can take very good care of myself.

D. Very well.

Mrs M. Why should I care what this Anglo-Florentine Society say of me? It doesn't hurt me; I don't care what they say of me; I am entirely indifferent; I am—— Oh, do not stand there like a stick, but tell me what these people say about me.

D. I—I—— It is so awkward

for me to tell you. You know Flitterly?

Mrs M. Flitterly! A sparrow!

D. Oh, he is a sparrow! What is to be done to the sparrow?

Mrs M. Nothing. He is beneath punishment—beneath contempt. A little chattering, intrusive, cruel—I suppose it would not do for me to horsewhip Flitterly?

D. It would be better for me to do that. I thought of pulling his nose: it is a little one; but I might do it with time. I think I should enjoy it.

Mrs M. It's too bad! It's too bad that a woman of my age should not be safe from these wretches—from the tongues of these malicious chatterers. The cowards, to attack a woman!

D. I was afraid that you would feel it.

Mrs M. I don't feel it. Why should I? Why should I feel it? But, good gracious! is the man going to stand there all day, and never tell me what this—what that—that—pha! what *he* says of me?

D. I don't like to tell you.

Mrs M. Do you take me for a fool, Lord Dawlish?

D. No; for a woman.

Mrs M. What does he say?

D. If you will know, you must. He says—he says that you and I are going to be married.

Mrs M. Married! You and I! Well, at least he might have invented something less preposterous.

D. Preposterous!

Mrs M. You and I!

D. I don't see anything preposterous in it. Why should not you and I be married? By George, I have made an offer!

Mrs M. Are you mad? You say——

D. Oh, I don't want to hurry you. Don't speak in a hurry. Think it over; think it over. Take time.

Mrs M. But do you mean——

D. Oh, please, don't hurry. Think it over. Any time will do.

Mrs M. Will it?

D. I am not clever, nor interesting; but if you don't mind me, I will do anything I can. You shall have any sort of society you like: fast or slow; literary or swell; or anything. Of course there would be plenty of money, and jewels, and cooks, and all that. You can have gowns, and cheque-books, and pin-money, and——

Mrs M. And find my own washing and beer. Lord Dawlish, are you offering me a situation?

D. Yes—no—I mean that I——

Mrs M. A thousand thanks. The wages are most tempting; but I have no thought of leaving my present place.

D. I fear that I have been offensive. I beg your pardon. I had better go. Good morning, Mrs Melton.

Mrs M. Good-bye, Lord Dawlish.

(So he goes out; straightway her mood changes, and she wishes him back again.)

Mrs M. *(sola).* He will never come back. I can't let him go for ever. I can't afford to lose a friend who makes me laugh so much. Flitterly may say what he likes—a goose! a sparrow! a grasshopper! I shall call him back.

(So she calls to him down the stair; then from the window; and as she calls from the window, he comes in at the door, watches her awhile, then speaks.)

D. Did you call me, Mrs Melton?

Mrs M. Is the man deaf? I have been screaming like a peacock; and all for your sake—all because I didn't want you to go away angry.

D. I thought it was you who were angry.

Mrs M. No, it was you.

D. Very well.

Mrs M. You must drop the preposterous subject for ever; and we will be good friends, as we were before. Sit down and be friendly.

D. Thank you. That is capital. We will be as we were before—as we were before.

Mrs M. You are sure you can bear the disappointment?

D. Oh yes. We will be friends, as we were. That is much better.

Mrs M. Lord Dawlish, you are simply delicious!

D. Am I? Thank you. And I may come and sit here sometimes?

Mrs M. In spite of Flitterly.

D. Flitterly, be——

Mrs M. Yes, by all means.

(Then he meditates, and after due deliberation speaks.)

D. I should like to ask you something, Mrs Melton—something personal.

Mrs M. Ask what you like, and I will answer if I choose.

D. May I ask as a friend—only as a friend, you know—if you are quite determined never to marry again? I know that it is no business of mine; but I can't help being curious about you. I don't think I am curious about anything else. But you are such an extraordinary woman.

Mrs M. Extraordinary because I have refused to be Lady Dawlish. It is strange, very. Oh, don't be alarmed; I have refused. But it is strange. I am a woman, and I refused rank and wealth. Wealth means gowns and cooks from Paris, a brougham and a victoria, a stepper, a tiger, and a pug: rank means walking out before other women, and the envy of all my sex. I am a woman, and I refuse these luxuries. You were mad when you offered them.

D. I don't think that I could be mad.

Mrs M. Not another word upon the subject.

D. But won't you satisfy my curiosity?

Mrs M. I never knew you so persistent.

D. I never was before.

Mrs M. Such ardent curiosity, such desperate perseverance, deserve to be rewarded. I have nothing to do for the moment, and there is one luxury which no woman can forego—the luxury of talking about herself. You needn't listen if the effort is too great: I address the chair, or the universe. You will hardly believe it of me; but I cherish a sentiment. There! Years and years ago—how many, I am woman enough not to specify—I lived with an aunt in Paris; you hate cousins, I am not in love with aunts: however, she was my only relation; there was no choice, and there I lived with her in Paris, and was finished; there was nothing to finish, for I knew nothing. Well, it was there, in Paris—I was quite a child—it was there that I one day met a boy scarcely older than myself. I am in love with him still. Quite idyllic, isn't it?

D. Very likely. In Paris? Paris.

Mrs M. There never was any one in the world like him—so brave, so good, so boyish: he rejoiced in life, certain of pleasure and purposing noble work.

D. (aside). Cousin John! Cousin John, of course. Confound Cousin John!

Mrs M. He fell in love with me at once, almost before I had fallen in love with him. We were both so absurdly shy, so silly, and so young. I can see him blush now, and I could blush then. But I shall be sentimental in a minute: this is egregious folly; of course it is folly, and it was folly; of course it was merely childish fancy, boy-and-girl sentiment, calf-love; of course a week's absence would put an end to it; and of course I

love him still. But forgive me, Lord Dawlish. Why should I bother you with this worn-out commonplace romance?

D. I like it. It interests me. Go on, if it does not bore you. It reminds me of something—of something which I had better forget.

Mrs M. You shall hear the rest: there isn't much. He was taken away, and—I suppose forgot me. I came out in Paris, went everywhere, was vastly gay, and terribly unhappy. My aunt was youngish, and good-looking—in a way; she was dying to be rid of me, and I knew it; and so things were very uncomfortable at home, until—until I married. Oh, I told him the truth, the whole truth: I told him that the love of my life had gone by. I am glad I told him the truth.

D. An American, was he not?

Mrs M. Yes. I was grateful to him, and proud of him. He was so good and true. But he made light of my story. He thought, like the rest, that it was a mere girlish fancy; that I should soon forget; that— There, you have my story! Touching, isn't it?

D. It is most extraordinary.

Mrs M. What is most extraordinary?

D. Your story is like my story.

Mrs M. It's everybody's story. It's common as the whooping-cough, and dull as the mumps. But come, give me the details of your case.

D. The details! If I can remember them.

Mrs M. If you can remember! Who would be a man?

D. It was in Paris—

Mrs M. In Paris?

D. It is just like your story. Suppose that we take it as told.

Mrs M. Go on. I must hear it.

D. I was sent to Paris when I was a boy, with a bear-leader.

There I saw a girl—a little bread-and-butter miss,—and—and I got fond of her—awfully fond of her. She was the dearest little girl—the best little thing. She was like—like——

Mrs M. Go on. What happened?

D. Nothing.

Mrs M. Nothing! Nonsense! Something always happens.

D. Nothing came of it. They said boy and girl, and calf-love, and all that, like the people in your story: and they packed me off to England.

Mrs M. Why did you go?

D. I always was a fool. They said that it would try the strength of her feelings; that, if we were both of the same mind when I had got my degree, the thing should be.

Mrs M. And you never wrote?

D. No.

Mrs M. Nor did he—never one line.

D. They said she wished me not to write.

Mrs M. How likely! These men, these men! They never know what letters are to women. What was the end?

D. The usual thing. As soon as my degree was all right I made for Paris. She was gone.

Mrs M. My poor friend! She was dead.

D. Married.

Mrs M. Married! how could she be so——

D. It is very like your story, ain't it? Only in my story the parties were not American.

Mrs M. American! What do you mean? I wasn't an American till I married one, and Tom——

D. Then it wasn't cousin John?

Mrs M. John! No, no, no! Lord Dawlish! Lord Dawlish! what is your family name?

D. My family name? What on earth, my dear Mrs Melton——

Mrs M. Quick, quick! What is it?

D. Why—er—why—Dashleigh, of course.

Mrs M. And you are Tom Dashleigh?

(As she looks at him, the truth dawns on him.)

D. And you are little Kitty Gray?

Mrs M. Oh my bright boy-lover, you are lost now indeed.

D. I think I have got a chill.

(When they have sat a little while in silence, she jumps up.)

Mrs M. No more sentiment, no more folly! Away with sentiment for ever! The boy and girl lovers are dead long ago; and we old folk who know the world may strew flowers on their grave and be gone. Look up, old friend, look up.

D. Yet you are you, and I—I suppose that I am I.

Mrs M. Young fools! young fools! why should we pity them, we wise old folk who know the world? Love is but—is but——

(And she dashes into music at the piano: soon her hands begin to fail, and she stoops over them to hide her eyes; then she jumps up in tears, and moving knocks over the little jar which was cousin John's gift. He would pick it up, but she stops him.)

No, no: let it lie there.

D. Shan't I pick up the pieces?

Mrs M. Let them lie there. One can never pick up the pieces.

D. Why not? I don't think I understand. But I can't bear to see you cry. I thought that you could not cry; that you were too clever and strong-minded to cry. Look here! You might have made something of me once. Is it too late, Mrs Melton?

Mrs M. The jar is broken.

D. Is it too late, Kitty?

Mrs M. Let us pick up the pieces together.

JOHN CALDIGATE.—PART XII.

CHAPTER XLVI.—BURNING WORDS.

"No power at all; none whatever," the banker said, when he was next compelled to carry on the conversation. This was immediately upon his return home from Cambridge, for his wife never allowed the subject to be forgotten or set aside. Every afternoon and every evening it was being discussed at all hours not devoted to prayers, and every morning it was renewed at the breakfast-table.

"That comes from Robert." Mr Bolton was not able to deny the assertion. "What does he mean by 'no power'?"

"We can't make her do it. The magistrates can't interfere."

"Magistrates! Has it been by the interference of magistrates that men have succeeded in doing great things? Was it by order from the magistrates that the lessons of Christ have been taught over all the world? Is there no such thing as persuasion? Has truth no power? Is she more deaf to argument and eloquence than another?"

"She is very deaf, I think," said the father, doubting his own eloquence.

"It is because no one has endeavoured to awaken her by burning words to a true sense of her situation." When she said this she must surely have forgotten much that had occurred during those weary hours which had been passed by her and her daughter outside there in the hall. "No power!" she repeated. "It is the answer always made by those who are too sleepy to do the Lord's work. It was because men said that they had no power that the grain fell upon stony places, where they had not

much earth. It is that aversion to face difficulties which causes the broad path to be crowded with victims. I, at any rate, will go. I may have no power, but I will make the attempt."

Soon after that she did make the attempt. Mr Bolton, though he was assured by Robert that such an attempt would produce no result, could not interfere to prevent it. Had he been far stronger than he was in his own house, he could hardly have forbidden the mother to visit the daughter. Hester had sent word to say that she did not wish to see even her mother. But this had been immediately after the verdict, when she was crushed and almost annihilated by her misery. Some weeks had now passed by, and it could not be that she would refuse to admit the visitor, when such a visitor knocked at her door. They had loved each other as mothers and daughters do love when there is no rival in the affection,—when each has no one else to love. There never had been a more obedient child, or a more loving parent. Much, no doubt, had happened since to estrange the daughter from the mother. A husband had been given to her who was more to her than any parent,—as a husband should be. And then there had been that terrible opposition, that struggle, that battle in the hall. But the mother's love had never waned because of that. She was sure that her child would not refuse to see her.

So the fly was ordered to take her out to Folking, and on the morning fixed she dressed herself in her blackest black. She always

wore brown or black,—brown being the colour suitable for the sober and sad domesticities of her week-days, which on ceremonies and Sabbath was changed for a more solemn black. But in her wardrobe there were two such gowns, one of which was apparently blacker than the other, nearer to a guise of widowhood,—more fit, at any rate, for general funereal obsequies. There are women who seem always to be burying some one; and Mrs Bolton, as she went forth to visit her daughter, was fit to bury any one short of her husband.

It was a hot day in August, and the fly travelled along the dusty road very slowly. She had intended to reach Folking at twelve, so that her interview might be over and that she might return without the need of eating. There is always some idea of festivity connected with food eaten at a friend's table, and she did not wish to be festive. She was, too, most unwilling to partake of John Caldigate's bread. But she did not reach the house till one, and when she knocked at the door Hester's modest lunch was about to be put upon the table.

There was considerable confusion when the servant saw Mrs Bolton standing in the doorway. It was quite understood by every one at Folking that for the present there was to be no intercourse between the Boltons and the Caldigates. It was understood that there should be no visitors of any kind at Folking, and it had been thought that Mr Smirkie had forced an entrance in an impertinent manner. But yet it was not possible to send Mrs Bolton from her own daughter's door with a mere "not at home." Of course she was shown in,—and was taken to the parlour, in which the lunch was prepared, while word was taken up to Hester announcing that her mother was there.

Mr Caldigate was in the house,—in his own book-room, as it used to be called,—and Hester went to him first. "Mamma is here,—in the dining-room."

"Your mother!"

"I long to see mamma."

"Of course you do."

"But she will want me to go away with her."

"She cannot take you unless you choose to go."

"But she will speak of nothing else. I know it. I wish she had not come."

"Surely, Hester, you can make her understand that your mind is made up."

"Yes, I shall do that; I must do that. But, father, it will be very painful. You do not know what things she can say. It nearly killed me when I was at the Grange. You will not see her, I suppose?"

"If you wish it, I will. She will not care to see me; and as things are at present, what room is there for friendship?"

"You will come if I send for you?"

"Certainly. If you send for me I will come at once."

Then she crept slowly out of the room, and very slowly and very silently made her way to the parlour-door. Though she was of a strong nature, unusually strong of will and fixed of purpose, now her heart misgave her. That terrible struggle, with all its incidents of weariness and agony, was present to her mind. Her mother could not turn the lock on her now; but, as she had said, it would be very dreadful. Her mother would say words to her which would go through her like swords. Then she opened the door, and for a moment there was the sweetness of an embrace. There was a prolonged tenderness in the kiss which, even to Mrs Bolton, had a charm for the moment to

soften her spirit. "Oh, mamma! my own mamma!"

"My child!"

"Yes, mamma;—every day when I pray for you I tell myself that I am still your child,—I do."

"My only one! my only one!—all that I have!" Then again they were in each other's arms. Yet, when they had last met, one had been the jailer, and the other the prisoner; and they had fought it out between them with a determined obstinacy which at moments had almost amounted to hatred. But now the very memory of these sad hours increased their tenderness. "Hester, through it all, do you not know that my heart yearns for you day and night?—that in my prayers I am always remembering you? that my dreams are happy because you are with me? that I am ever longing for you as Ruth longed for Naomi? I am as Rachel weeping for her children, who would not be comforted because they are not. Day and night my heart-strings are torn asunder because my eyes behold you not."

It was true,—and the daughter knew it to be true. But what could be done? There had grown up something for her, holier, greater, more absorbing even than a mother's love. Happily for most young wives, though the new tie may surmount the old one, it does not crush it or smother it. The mother retains a diminished hold, and knowing what nature has intended, is content. She, too, with some subsidiary worship, kneels at the new altar, and all is well. But here, though there was abundant love, there was no sympathy. The cause of discord was ever present to them both. Unless John Caldigate was acknowledged to be a fitting husband, not even the mother could be received with a full welcome. And unless John Caldi-

gate were repudiated, not even the daughter could be accepted as altogether pure. Parental and filial feelings sufficed for nothing between them beyond the ecstasy of a caress.

As Hester was standing mute, still holding her mother's hand, the servant came to the door, and asked whether she would have her lunch.

"You will stay and eat with me, mamma? But you will come up to my room first."

"I will go up to your room, Hester."

"Then we will have our lunch," Hester said, turning to the servant. So the two went together to the upper chamber, and in a moment the mother had fetched her baby, and placed it in her mother's arms.

"I wish he were at the Grange," said Mrs Bolton. Then Hester shook her head; but feeling the security of her position, left the baby with its grandmother. "I wish he were at the Grange. It is the only fitting home for him at present."

"No, mamma; that cannot be."

"It should be so, Hester; it should be so."

"Pray do not speak of it, dear mamma."

"Have I not come here on purpose that I might speak of it? Sweet as it is to me to have you in my arms, do you not know that I have come for that purpose,—for that only?"

"It cannot be so."

"I will not take such an answer, Hester. I am not here to speak of pleasure or delights,—not to speak of sweet companionship, or even of a return to that more godly life which, I think, you would find in your father's house. Had not this ruin come, unhappy though I might have been, and distrustful, I should not have interfered. Those whom God has joined together, let not man put asunder."

"It is what I say to myself every hour. God has joined us, and no man, no number of men, shall put us asunder."

"But, my own darling,—God has not joined you! When that man pretended to be joined to you, he had a wife then living,—still living."

"No."

"Will you set up your own opinion against evidence which the jury has believed, which the judge has believed, which all the world has believed?"

"Yes, I will," said Hester, the whole nature of whose face was now altered, and who looked as she did when sitting in the hall-chair at Puritan Grange,—*"I will. Though I were almost to know that he had been false, I should still believe him to be true."*

"I cannot understand that, Hester."

"But I know him to be true, —quite true," she said, wishing to erase the feeling which her unguarded admission had made. "Not to believe him to have been true would be death to me; and for my boy's sake, I would wish to live. But I have no doubt, and I will listen to no one,—not even to you, when you tell me that God did not join us together."

"You cannot go behind the law, Hester. As a citizen, you must obey the law."

"I will live here,—as a citizen, —till he has been restored to me."

"But he will not then be your husband. People will not call you by his name. He cannot have two wives. She will be his wife. Oh, Hester, have you thought of it?"

"I have thought of it," she said, raising her face, looking upwards through the open window, out away towards the heavens, and pressing her foot firmly upon the floor. "I have thought of it,—very much; and I have asked—the Lord—for

counsel. And He has given it me. He has told me what to believe, what to know, and how to live. I will never again lie with my head upon his bosom unless all that be altered. But I will serve him as his wife, and obey him; and if I can I will comfort him. I will never desert him. And not all the laws that were ever made, nor all the judges that ever sat in judgment, shall make me call myself by another name than his."

The mother had come there to speak burning words, and she had in some sort prepared them; but now she found herself almost silenced by the energy of her daughter. And when her girl told her that she had applied to her God for counsel, and that the Lord had answered her prayers—that the Lord had directed her as to her future life,—then the mother hardly knew how to mount to higher ground, so as to seem to speak from a more exalted eminence. And yet she was not at all convinced. That the Lord should give bad counsel she knew to be impossible. That the Lord would certainly give good counsel to such a suppliant, if asked aright, she was quite sure. But they who send others to the throne of heaven for direct advice are apt to think that the asking will not be done aright unless it be done with their spirit and their bias,—with the spirit and bias which they feel when they recommend the operation. No one has ever thought that direct advice from the Lord was sufficient authority for the doing of that of which he himself disapproved. It was Mrs Bolton's daily custom to kneel herself and ask for such counsel, and to enjoin such asking upon all those who were subject to her influence. But had she been assured by some young lady to whom she had recommended

the practice that heavenly warrant had thus been secured for balls and theatres, she would not have scrupled to declare that the Lord had certainly not been asked aright. She was equally certain of some defalcation now. She did not doubt that Hester had done as she had said. That the prayer had been put up with energetic fervour, she was sure. But energetic fervour in prayer was, she thought, of no use,—nay, was likely to be most dangerous, when used in furtherance of human prepossessions and desires. Had Hester said her prayers with a proper feeling of self-negation,—in that religious spirit which teaches the poor mortal here on earth to know that darkness and gloom are safer than mirth and comfort,—then the Lord would have told her to leave Folking, to go back to Puritan Grange, and to consent once more to be called Hester Bolton. This other counsel had not come from the Lord,—had come only from Hester's own polluted heart. But she was not at the moment armed with words sufficiently strong to explain all this.

"Hester," she said, "does not all this mean that your own proud spirit is to have a stronger dominion over you than the experience and wisdom of all your friends?"

"Perhaps it does. But, at any rate, my proud spirit will retain its pride."

"You will be obstinate?"

"Certainly I will. Nothing on earth shall make me leave this house till I am told by its owner to go."

"Who is its owner? Old Mr Caldigate is its owner."

"I hardly know. Though John has explained it again and again, I am so bad at such things that I am not sure. But I can do what I please with it. I am the mistress here. As you say that the Grange

is your house, I can say that this is mine. It is the abode appointed for me, and here I will abide."

"Then, Hester, I can only tell you that you are sinning. It is a heavy, grievous, and most obvious sin."

"Dear mother,—dear mamma; I knew how it would be if you came. It is useless for me to say more. Were I to go away, that to me would be the sin. Why should we discuss it any more? There comes a time to all of us when we must act on our own responsibility. My husband is in prison, and cannot personally direct me. No doubt I could go, were I so pleased. His father would not hinder me, though he is most unwilling that I should go. I must judge a little for myself. But I have his judgment to fall back upon. He told me to stay, and I shall stay."

Then there was a pause, during which Mrs Bolton was thinking of her burning words,—was remembering the scorn with which she had treated her husband when he told her that they had "no power." She had endeavoured herself not to be sleepy in doing the Lord's work. But her seed, too, had fallen upon stony places. She was powerless to do, or even to say, anything further. "Then I may go," she muttered.

"You will come and eat with me, mamma."

"No, my dear,—no."

"You do not wish that there should be a quarrel?"

"There is very much, Hester, that I do not wish. I have long ceased to trust much to any wishes. There is a great gulf between us, and I will not attempt to bridge it by the hollow pretence of sitting at table with you. I will still pray that you may be restored to me." Then she went to the door.

"Mamma, you will kiss me before you go."

"I will cover you with kisses when you return to your own home." But in spite of this, Hester went down with her into the hall, holding by her raiment; and as Mrs Bolton got into the fly, she did succeed in kissing her mother's hand.

"She has gone," said Hester, going to her father-in-law's room. "Though I was so glad to see her, I wish she had not come. When people think so very, very differently on a matter which is so very, very important, it is better that they should not meet, let them love each other ever so."

As far as Hester and Mr Caldigate were concerned, the visit had in truth been made without much inconvenience. There had been no absolute violence,—no repetition of such outward quarrelling as had made those two days at the Grange so memorable. There was almost a feeling of relief in Hester's bosom

when her mother was driven away after that successful grasp at the parting hand. Though they had differed much, they had not hated each other during that last half-hour. Hester had been charged with sin;—which, however, had been a matter of course. But in Mrs Bolton's heart there was a feeling which made her return home very uncomfortable. Having twitted her husband with his lack of power, she had been altogether powerless herself; and now she was driven to confess to herself that no further step could be taken. "She is obstinate," she said to her husband,—*"stiff-necked in her sin, as are all determined sinners. I can say no more to her. It may be that the Lord will soften her heart when her sorrows have endured yet for a time."* But she said no more of burning words, or of eloquence, or of the slackness of the work of those who work as though they were not in earnest.

CHAPTER XLVII.—CURLYDOWN AND BAGWAX.

There had been a sort of pledge given at the trial by Sir John Joram that the matter of the envelope should be further investigated. He had complained in his defence that the trial had been hurried on,—that time had not been allowed for full inquiries, seeing that the character of the deed by which his client had been put in jeopardy depended upon what had been done on the other side of the globe. "This crime," he had said, "if it be a crime, was no doubt committed in the parish church of Utterden in the early part of last year; but all the evidence which has been used or which could be used to prove it to have been a crime, has reference to things done

long ago, and far away. Time has not been allowed us for rebutting this evidence by counter-evidence." And yet much time had been allowed. The trial had been postponed from the spring to the summer assizes; and then the offence was one which, from its very nature, required speedy notice. The Boltons, who became the instigators of the prosecution, demanded that the ill-used woman should be relieved as quickly as possible from her degradation. There had been a general feeling that the trial should not be thrown over to another year; and, as we are aware, it had been brought to judgment, and the convicted criminal was in jail. But Sir John still persevered, and

to this perseverance he had been instigated very much by a certain clerk in the post-office.

Two post-office clerks had been used as witnesses at the trial, of whom the elder, Mr Curlydown, had been by no means a constant or an energetic witness. A witness, when he is brought up for the defence, should not be too scrupulous, or he will be worse than useless. In a matter of fact a man can only say what he saw, or tell what he heard, or declare what he knew. He should at least do no more. Though it be to save his father, he should not commit perjury. But when it comes to opinion, if a man allows himself to waver, he will be taken as thinking the very opposite of what he does think. Such had been the case with Mr Curlydown. He had intended to be very correct. He had believed that the impression of the Sydney stamp was on the whole adverse to the idea that it had been obtained in the proper way; and yet he had, when cross-examined, acknowledged that it might very probably have been obtained in the proper way. It certainly had not been "smudged" at all, and such impressions generally did become "smudged." But then he was made to say also that impressions very often did not become smudged. And as to the word "Nobble" which should have been stamped upon the envelope, he thought that in such a case its absence was very suspicious; but still he was brought to acknowledge that post-masters in provincial offices far away from inspection, frequently omit that part of their duty. All this had tended to rob the envelope of those attributes of deceit and conspiracy which Sir John Joram attributed to it, and had justified the judge in his opinion that Mr Curlydown's evidence had told them little or no-

thing. But even Mr Curlydown had found more favour with the judge than Samuel Bagwax, the junior of the two post-office witnesses. Samuel Bagwax had perhaps been a little too energetic. He had made the case his own, and was quite sure that the envelope had been tampered with. I think that the counsel for the Crown pressed his witness unfairly when he asked Mr Bagwax whether he was absolutely certain that an envelope with such an impression could not have passed through the post-office in the ordinary course of business. "Nothing is impossible," Mr Bagwax had replied. "Is it not very much within the sphere of possibility?" the learned gentleman had asked. The phrase was misleading, and Mr Bagwax was induced to say that it might be so. But still his assurance would probably have had weight with the jury but for the overstrained honesty of his companion. The judge had admonished the jury that in reference to such a point they should use their own common-sense rather than the opinion of such a man as Mr Bagwax. A man of ordinary common-sense would know how the mark made by a die on a letter would be affected by the sort of manipulation to which the letter bearing it would be subjected;—and so on. From all which it came to pass that the judge was understood to have declared that that special envelope might very well have passed in ordinary course through the Sydney post-office.

But Samuel Bagwax was not a man to be put down by the injustice of lawyers. He knew himself to have been ill treated. He was confident that no man alive was more competent than himself to form an opinion on such a subject; and he was sure, quite sure,—perhaps a little too sure,—that

there had been some dishonesty with that envelope. And thus he became a strong partisan of John Caldigate and of Mrs John Caldigate. If there had been tampering with that envelope, then the whole thing was fraudulent, false, and the outcome of a base conspiracy. Many points were present to his mind which the lawyers between them would not allow him to explain properly to a jury. When had that die been cut, by which so perfect an impression had been formed? If it could be proved that it had been cut since the date it bore, then of course the envelope would be fraudulent. But it was only in Sydney that this could be ascertained. He was sure that a week's ordinary use would have made the impression less perfect. Some letters must of course be subjected to new dies, and this letter might in due course have been so subjected. But it was more probable that a new stamp should have been selected for a surreptitious purpose. All this could be ascertained by the book of daily impressions kept in the Sydney post-office;—but there had not been time to get this evidence from Sydney since this question of the impression had been ventilated. It was he who had first given importance to the envelope; and being a resolute and almost heroic man, he was determined that no injustice on the part of a Crown prosecutor, no darkness in a judge's mind, no want of intelligence in a jury, should rob him of the delight of showing how important to the world was a proper understanding of post-office details. He still thought that that envelope might be made to prove a conspiracy on the part of Crinkett and the others, and he succeeded in getting Sir John Joram to share that belief.

The envelope itself was still preserved among the sacred archives

of the trial. That had not been bodily confided to Samuel Bagwax. But various photographs had been made of the document, which no doubt reproduced exactly every letter, every mark, and every line which was to be seen upon it by the closest inspection. There was the direction, which was admitted to be in Caldigate's handwriting,—the postage-stamp, with its obliterating lines,—and the impression of the Sydney post-mark. That was nearly all. The paper of the envelope had no water-marks. Bagwax thought that if he could get hold of the envelope itself something might be done even with that; but here Sir John could not go along with him, as it had been fully acknowledged that the envelope had passed from the possession of Caldigate into the hands of the woman bearing the written address. If anything could be done, it must be done by the post-marks,—and those post-marks Bagwax studied morning, noon, and night.

It had now been decided that Bagwax was to be sent out to Sydney at the expense of the Caldigates. There had been difficulty as to leave of absence for such a purpose. The man having been convicted, the postmaster-general was bound to regard him as guilty, and hesitated to allow a clerk to be absent so long on behalf of a man who was already in prison. But the Secretary of State overruled this scruple, and the leave was to be given. Bagwax was elate,—first and chiefly because he trusted that he would become the means of putting right a foul and cruel wrong. For in these days Bagwax almost wept over the hardships inflicted on that poor lady at Folking. But he was elated also by the prospect of his travels, and by the godsend of a six months' leave of absence. He was a little proud, too, of having had this

personal attention paid to him by the Secretary of State. All this was very gratifying. But that which gratified him was not so charming to his brother clerks. They had never enjoyed the privilege of leaving that weary office for six months. They were not allowed to occupy themselves in contemplating an envelope. They were never specially mentioned by the Secretary of State. Of course there was a little envy, and a somewhat general feeling that Bagwax, having got to the weak side of Sir John Joram, was succeeding in having himself sent out as a first-class overland passenger to Sydney, merely as a job. Paris to be seen, and the tunnel, and the railways through Italy, and the Suez Canal,—all these places, not delightful to the wives of Indian officers coming home or going out, were an Elysium to the post-office mind. His expenses to be paid for six months on the most gentleman-like footing, and his salary going on all the time! Official human nature, good as it generally is, cannot learn that such glories are to be showered on one not specially deserving head without something akin to enmity. The general idea, therefore, in the office, was that Bagwax would do no good in Sydney, that others would have been better than Bagwax,—in fact, that of all the clerks in all the departments, Bagwax was the very last man who ought to have been selected for an enterprise demanding secrecy, discretion, and some judicial severity.

Curlydown and Bagwax occupied the same room at the office in St Martin's-le-Grand; and there it was their fate in life to arrange, inspect, and generally attend to those apparently unintelligible hieroglyphics with which the outside coverings of our correspondence are generally bedaubed. Curlydown's hair had fallen from his head, and his face had

become puckered with wrinkles, through anxiety to make these markings legible and intelligible. The popular newspaper, the popular member of Parliament, and the popular novelist,—the name of Charles Dickens will of course present itself to the reader who remembers the Circumlocution office,—have had it impressed on their several minds,—and have endeavoured to impress the same idea on the minds of the public generally,—that the normal Government clerk is quite indifferent to his work. No greater mistake was ever made, or one showing less observation of human nature. It is the nature of a man to appreciate his own work. The felon who is made simply to move shot, perishes because he knows his work is without aim. The fault lies on the other side. The policeman is ambitious of arresting everybody. The lawyer would rather make your will for you gratis than let you make your own. The General can believe in nothing but in well-trained troops. Curlydown would willingly have expended the whole net revenue of the post-office,—and his own,—in improving the machinery for stamping letters. But he had hardly succeeded in life. He had done his duty, and was respected by all. He lived comfortably in a suburban cottage with a garden, having some private means, and had brought up a happy family in prosperity;—but he had done nothing new. Bagwax, who was twenty years his junior, had with manifest effects, added a happy drop of turpentine to the stamping-oil,—and in doing so had broken Curlydown's heart. The "Bagwax Stamping Mixture" had absolutely achieved a name, which was printed on the official list of stores. Curlydown's mind was vacillating between the New River and a pension,—between death in the breach and acknow-

ledged defeat,—when a new interest was lent to his life by the Caldigate envelope. It was he who had been first sent by the postmaster-general to Sir John Joram's chambers. But the matter had become too large for himself alone, and in an ill-fated hour Bagwax had been consulted. Now Bagwax was to be sent to Sydney,—almost with the appointments of a lawyer!

They still occupied the same room,—a fact which infinitely increased the torments of Curlydown's position. They ought to have been moved very far asunder. Curlydown was still engaged in the routine ordinary work of the day, seeing that the proper changes were made in all the stamps used during the various hours—assuring himself that the crosses and letters and figures upon which so much of the civilisation of Europe depended, were properly altered and arranged. And it may well be that his own labours were made heavier by the devotion of his colleagues to other matters. And yet from time to time Bagwax would ask him questions, never indeed taking his advice, but still demanding his assistance. Curlydown was not naturally a man of ill-temper or of an angry heart. But there were moments in which he could hardly abstain from expressing himself with animosity.

On a certain morning in August Bagwax was seated at his table, which as usual was laden with the envelopes of many letters. There were some hundreds before him, the marks on which he was perusing with a strong magnifying-glass. It had been arranged that he was to start on his great journey in the first week in September, and he employed his time before he went in scanning all the envelopes bearing the Sydney post-mark which he had been able to procure in Eng-

land. He spent the entire day with a magnifying-glass in his hand;—but as Curlydown was also always armed in the same fashion, that was not peculiar. They did much of their work with such tools.

The date on the envelope,—the date conveyed by the impression, to which so much attention had been given,—was 10th May 1873. Bagwax had succeeded in getting covers bearing dates very close to that. The 7th of May had been among his treasures for some time, and now he had acquired an entire letter, envelope and all, which bore the Sydney impression of the 13th May. This was a great triumph. "I have brought it within a week," he said to Curlydown, bending down over his glass, and inspecting at the same time the two dates.

"What's the good of that?" asked Curlydown, as he passed rapidly under his own glass the stamps which it was his duty to inspect from day to day.

"All the good in the world," said Bagwax, brandishing his own magnifier with energy. "It is almost conclusive." Now the argument with Bagwax was this,—that if he found in the Sydney post-marks of 7th May, and in those of 13th May, the same deviations or bruises in the die, those deviations must have existed also on the days between these two dates;—and as the impression before him was quite perfect, without any such deviation, did it not follow that it must have been obtained in some manner outside the ordinary course of business?

"There are a dozen stamps in use at the Sydney office," said Curlydown.

"Perhaps so; or, at any rate, three or four. But I can trace as well as possible the times at which new stamps were supplied. Look here." Then he threw himself over

the multitude of envelopes, all of which had been carefully arranged as to dates, and began to point out the periods. "Here, you see, in 1873, there is nothing that quite tallies with the Caldigate letter. I have measured them to the twentieth part of an inch, and I am sure that early in May '73 there was not a stamp in use in the Sydney office which could have made that impression. I have eighteen Mays '73, and not one of them could have been made by the stamp that did this." As he spoke thus, he rapped his finger down on the copy of the sacred envelope which he was using. "Is not that conclusive?"

"If it was not conclusive to keep a man from going to prison," said Curlydown, remembering the failure of his own examination, "it will not be conclusive to get him out again."

"There I differ. No doubt further evidence is necessary, and therefore I must go to Sydney."

"If it is conclusive, I don't see why you should go to Sydney at all. If your proof is so perfect, why should that fellow be kept in prison while you are running about the world?"

This idea had also occurred to Bagwax, and he had thought whether it would be possible for him to be magnanimous enough to perfect his proof in England, so as to get a pardon from the Secretary of State at once, to his own manifest injury. "What would satisfy you and me," said Bagwax, "wouldn't satisfy the ignorant." To the conductor of an omnibus on the Surrey side of the river, the man who does not know what "The Castle" means is ignorant. The outsider who is in a mist as to the "previous question," or "the order of the day," is ignorant to the member of Parliament. To have no definite date conveyed by the term "Rogation Sunday" is to the clerical mind

gross ignorance. The horsey man thinks you have been in bed all your life if the "near side" is not as descriptive to you as "the left hand." To Bagwax and Curlydown, not to distinguish post-marks was to be ignorant. "I fear it wouldn't satisfy the ignorant," said Bagwax, thinking of his projected journey to Sydney.

"Proof is proof," said Curlydown. "I don't think you'll ever get him out. The time has gone by. But you may do just as much here as there."

"I'm sure we shall get him out. I'll never rest in my bed till we have got him out."

"Mr Justice Bramber won't mind whether you rest in your bed or not,—nor yet the Secretary of State."

"Sir John Joram——" began Bagwax. In these discussions Sir John Joram was always his main staff.

"Sir John Joram has got other fish to fry before this time. It's a marvel to me, Bagwax, that they should give way to all this nonsense. If anything could be done, it could be done in half the time,—and if anything could be done, it could be done here. By the time you're back from Sydney, Caldigate's time will be half out. Why don't you let Sir John see your proof? You don't want to lose your trip, I suppose."

Caldigate was languishing in prison, and that poor, nameless lady was separated from her husband, and he had the proof lying there on the table before him,—sufficient proof, as he did in his heart believe! But how often does it fall to the lot of a post-office clerk to be taken round the world free of expense? The way Curlydown put it was ill-natured and full of envy. Bagwax was well aware that Curlydown was instigated solely by envy. But still, these were his own con-

victions,—and Bagwax was in truth a soft-hearted, conscientious man.

“I do think it ought to be enough for any Secretary of State,” said he, “and I’ll go to Sir John Joram tomorrow. Of course, I should like to see the world;—who wouldn’t?

But I’d rather be the means of restoring that fellow to his poor wife, than be sent to all the four quarters of the globe with a guinea a-day for personal expenses.” In this way he nobly made up his mind to go at once to Sir John Joram.

CHAPTER XLVIII.—SIR JOHN JORAM’S CHAMBERS.

Mr Curlydown’s insinuations had been very cruel, but also very powerful. Bagwax, as he considered the matter that night in his bed, did conscientiously think that a discreet and humane Secretary of State would let the unfortunate husband out of prison on the evidence which he (Bagwax) had already collected. My readers will not perhaps agree with him. The finding of a jury and the sentence of a judge must be regarded seriously by Secretaries of State, and it is probable that Bagwax’s theory would not make itself clear to that great functionary. A good many “ifs” were necessary. If the woman claiming Caldigate as her husband would swear falsely to anything in that matter, then she would swear falsely to everything. If this envelope had never passed through the Sydney post-office, then she would have sworn falsely about the letter,—and therefore her evidence would have been altogether false. If this post-mark had not been made in the due course of business, and on the date as now seen, then the envelope had not passed regularly through the Sydney office. So far it was all clear to the mind of Bagwax, and almost clear that the post-mark could not have been made on the date it bore. The result for which he was striving with true faith had taken such a hold of his mind,—he was so adverse to the Smith-Crinkett interest, and so generously anxious for John

Caldigate and the poor lady at Folking, that he could not see obstacles;—he could not even clearly see the very obstacles which made his own going to Sydney seem to others to be necessary. And yet he longed to go to Sydney with all his heart. He would be almost broken-hearted if he were robbed of that delight.

In this frame of mind he packed all his envelopes carefully into a large hand-bag, and started in a cab for Sir John Joram’s chambers. “Where are you going with them now?” Curlydown asked, somewhat disdainfully, just as Bagwax was starting. Curlydown had taken upon himself of late to ridicule the envelopes, and had become almost an anti-Caldigatite. Bagwax vouchsafed to make him no reply. On the previous afternoon he had declared his purpose of going at once to Sir John, and had written, as Curlydown well knew, a letter to Sir John’s clerk to make an appointment. Sir John was known to be in town though it was the end of August, being a laborious man who contented himself with a little partridge-shooting by way of holiday. It had been understood that he was to see Bagwax before his departure. All this had been known to Curlydown, and the question had been asked only to exasperate. There was a sarcasm in the “now” which determined Bagwax to start without a word of reply.

As he went down to the Temple in the cab he turned over in his

mind a great question which often troubles many of us. How far was he bound to sacrifice himself for the benefit of others? He had done his duty zealously in this matter, and now was under orders to continue the work in a manner which opened up to him a whole paradise of happiness. How grand was this opportunity of seeing something of the world beyond St Martin's-le-Grand! And then the pecuniary gain would be so great! Hitherto he had received no pay for what he had done. He was a simple post-office clerk, and was paid for his time by the Crown,—very moderately. On this projected journey all his expenses would be paid for him, and still he would have his salary. Sir John Joram had declared the journey to be quite necessary. The Secretary of State had probably not occupied his mind much with the matter; but in the mind of Bagwax there was a fixed idea that the Secretary thought of little else, and that the Secretary had declared that his hands were tied till Bagwax should have been to Sydney. But his conscience told him that the journey was not necessary, and that the delay would be cruel. In that cab Bagwax made up his mind that he would do his duty like an honest man.

Sir John's chambers in Pump Court were gloomy without, though commodious and ample within. Bagwax was now well known to the clerk, and was received almost as a friend. "I think I've got it all as clear as running water, Mr Jones," he said, feeling no doubt that Sir John's clerk, Mr Jones, must have that interest in the case which pervaded his own mind.

"That will be a good thing for the gentleman in prison, Mr Bagwax."

"And for the lady; poor lady! I don't know whether I don't think almost more of her than of him."

Mr Jones was returning to his work having sent in word to Sir John of this visitor's arrival. But Bagwax was too full of his subject, and of his own honesty, for that. "I don't think that I need go out after all, Mr Jones."

"Oh, indeed!"

"Of course it will be a great sell for me."

"Will it, now?"

"Sydney, I am told, is an Elysium upon earth."

"It's much the same as Botany Bay; isn't it?" asked Jones.

"Oh, not at all; quite a different place. I was reading a book the other day which said that Sydney harbour is the most beautiful thing God ever made on the face of the globe."

"I know there used to be convicts there," said Mr Jones, very positively.

"Perhaps they had a few once, but never many. They have oranges there, and a Parliament almost as good as our own, and a beautiful new post-office. But I shan't have to go, Mr Jones. Of course, a man has to do his duty."

"Some do, and more don't. That's as far as I see, Mr Bagwax."

"I'm all for Nelson's motto, Mr Jones,—'England expects that every man this day shall do his duty.'" In repeating these memorable words Bagwax raised his voice.

"Sir John don't like to hear anything through the partition, Mr Bagwax."

"I beg pardon. But whenever I think of that glorious observation I am apt to become a little excited. It'll go a long way, Mr Jones, in keeping a man straight if he'll only say it to himself often enough."

"But not to roar it out in an eminent barrister's chambers. He didn't hear you, I daresay; only I thought I'd just caution you."

"Quite right, Mr Jones. Now I mean to do mine. I think we can get the party out of prison without any journey to Sydney at all; and I'm not going to stand in the way of it. I have devoted myself to this case, and I'm not going to let my own interest stand in the way. Mr Jones, let a man be ever so humble, England does expect—that he'll do his duty."

"By George, he'll hear you, Mr Bagwax!—he will indeed." But at that moment Sir John's bell was rung, and Bagwax was summoned into the great man's room. Sir John was sitting at a large office-table so completely covered with papers that a whole chaos of legal atoms seemed to have been deposited there by the fortuitous operation of ages. Bagwax, who had his large bag in his hand, looked forlornly round the room for some freer and more fitting board on which he might expose his documents. But there was none. There were bookshelves filled with books, and a large sofa which was covered also with papers, and another table laden with what seemed to be a concrete chaos,—whereas the chaos in front of Sir John was a chaos in solution. Sir John liked Bagwax, though he was generally opposed to zealous co-operators. There was in the man a mixture of intelligence and absurdity, of real feeling and affectation, of genuine humility as to himself personally and of thorough confidence in himself post-officially, which had gratified Sir John; and Sir John had been quite sure that the post-office clerk had intended to speak the absolute truth, with an honest, manly conviction in the innocence of his client, and in the guilt of the witnesses on the other side. He was therefore well disposed towards Bagwax. "Well, Mr Bagwax," he said; "so I under-

stand you have got a little further in the matter since I saw you last."

"A good deal further, Sir John."

"As how? Perhaps you can explain it shortly."

This was troublesome. Bagwax did not think that he could explain the matter very shortly. He could not explain the matter at all without showing his envelopes; and how was he to show them in the present condition of that room? He immediately dived into his bag and brought forth the first bundle of envelopes. "Perhaps, Sir John, I had better put them out upon the floor," he said.

"Must I see all those?"

There were many more bundles within, which Bagwax was anxious that the barrister should examine minutely. "It is very important, Sir John. It is indeed. It is really altogether a case of post-marks,—altogether. We have never in our branch had anything so interesting before. If we can show that that envelope certainly was not stamped with that post-mark in the Sydney post-office on the 10th May 1873, then we shall get him out,—shan't we?"

"It will be very material, Mr Bagwax," said Sir John, cautiously.

"They will all have sworn falsely, and then somebody must have obtained the post-mark surreptitiously. There must have been a regular plant. The stamp must have been made up and dated on purpose,—so as to give a false date. Some official in the Sydney post-office must have been employed."

"That's what we want you to find out over there," said Sir John, who was not quite so zealous, perhaps not quite so conscientious, as his more humble assistant,—and whose mind was more occupied with other matters. "You'll find out all that at Sydney."

The temptation was very great.

Sir John wanted him to go,—told him that he ought to go! Sir John was the man responsible for the whole matter. He, Bagwax, had done his best. Could it be right for him to provoke Sir John by contesting the matter,—contesting it so much to his own disadvantage? Had he not done enough for honesty?—enough to satisfy even that grand idea of duty? As he turned the bundle of documents round in his hand, he made up his mind that he had not done enough. There was a little gurgle in his throat, almost a tear in his eye, as he replied, “I don’t think I should be wanted to go if you would look at these envelopes.”

Sir John understood it all at once,—and there was much to understand. He knew how anxious the man was to go on this projected journey, and he perceived the cause which was inducing him to surrender his own interests. He remembered that the journey must be made at a great expense to his own client. He ran over the case in his mind, and acknowledged to himself that conclusive evidence,—evidence that should be quite conclusive,—of fraud as to the envelope, might possibly suffice to release his client at once from prison. He told himself also that he could not dare to express an opinion on the matter himself without a close inspection of those post-marks,—that a close inspection might probably take two hours, and that the two hours would finally have to be abstracted from the already curtailed period of his nightly slumbers. Then he thought of the state of his tables, and of the difficulties as to space. Perhaps that idea was the one strongest in his mind against the examination.

But then what a hero was Bagwax! What self-abnegation was there! Should he be less ready to

devote himself to his client,—he, who was paid for his work,—than this post-office clerk, who was as pure in his honesty as he was zealous in the cause? “There are a great many of them, I suppose?” he said, almost whining.

“A good many, Sir John.”

“Have at it!” said the Queen’s Counsel and late Attorney-General, springing up from his chair. Bagwax almost jumped out of the way, so startled was he by the quick and sudden movement. Sir John rang his bell; but not waiting for the clerk, began to hurl the chaos in solution on to the top of the concrete chaos. Bagwax naturally attempted to assist him. “For G—’s sake, don’t you touch them!” said Sir John, as though avenging himself by a touch of scorn for the evil thing which was being done to him. Then Jones hurried into the room, and with more careful hands assisted his master, trying to preserve some order with the disturbed papers. In this way the large office-table was within three minutes made clear for the Bagwaxian strategy. Mr Jones declared afterwards that it was seven years since he had seen the entire top of that table. “Now go ahead!” said Sir John, who seemed, during the operation, to have lost something of his ordinary dignity.

Bagwax, who since that little check had been standing perfectly still, with his open bag in his hands, at once began his work. The plain before him was immense, and he was able to marshal all his forces. In the centre, and nearest to Sir John, as he sat in his usual chair, were exposed all the Mays’73. For it was thus that he denominated the envelopes with which he was so familiar. There were 71’s and 72’s, and 74’s and 75’s. But the 73’s were all arranged in months, and then in days. He began by ex-

plaining that he had obtained all these envelopes "promiscuously," as he said. There had been no selection, none had been rejected. Then courteously handing his official magnifying-glass to the barrister, he invited him to inspect them all generally,—to make, as it were, a first cursory inspection,—so that he might see that there was not one perfect impression, perfect as that impression on the Caldigate envelope was perfect. "Not one," said Bagwax, beating his bosom in triumph.

"That seems perfect," said Sir John, pointing with the glass to a selected specimen.

"Your eyes are very good, Sir John,—very good indeed. You have found the cleanest and truest of the whole lot. But if you'll examine the tail of the Y, you'll see it's been rubbed a little. And then if you'll follow with your eye the circular line which makes up the round of the post-mark, you'll find a dent on the outside bar. I go more on the dents in those bars, Sir John, than I do on the figures. All the bars are dented more or less,—particularly the Mays '73. They don't remain quite true, Sir John,—not after a day's fair use. They've taken a new stamp out of the store to do the Caldigate envelope. They couldn't get at the stamps in use. That's how it has been."

Sir John listened in silence as he continued to examine one envelope after another through the glass. "Now, Sir John, if we come to the Mays '73, we shall find that just about that time there has been no new stamp brought into use. There isn't one, either, that has exactly the Caldigate breadth. I've brought a rule by which you can get to the fiftieth of an inch." Here Bagwax brought out a little ivory instrument marked all over

with figures. "Of course they're intended to be of the same pattern. But gradually, very gradually, the circle has always become smaller. Isn't that conclusive? The Caldigate impression is a little, very little,—ever so little,—but a little smaller than any of the Mays '73. Isn't that conclusive?"

"If I understand it, Mr Bagwax, you don't pretend to say that you have got impressions of all the stamps which may have been in use in the Sydney office at that time? But in Sydney, if I understand the matter rightly, they keep daily impressions of all the stamps in a book."

"Just so—just so, Sir John," said Bagwax, feeling that every word spoken to the lawyer renewed his own hopes of going out to Sydney,—but feeling also that Sir John would be wrong, very wrong, if he subjected his client to so unnecessarily prolonged a detention in the Cambridge county prison. "They do keep a book which would be quite conclusive. I could have the pages photographed."

"Would not that be best? and you might 'probably find out who it was who gave this fraudulent aid."

"I could find out everything," said Bagwax, energetically; "but —"

"But what?"

"It is all found out there. It is indeed, Sir John. If I could get you to go along with me, you would see that that letter couldn't have gone through the Sydney post-office."

"I think I do see it. But it is so difficult, Mr Bagwax, to make others see things."

"And if it didn't,—and it never did;—but if it didn't, why did they say it did? Why did they swear it did? Isn't that enough to make any Secretary let him go?"

The energy, the zeal, the true faith of the man, were admirable. Sir John was half disposed to rise from his seat to embrace the man, and hail him as his brother,—only that had he done so he would have made himself as ridiculous as Bagwax. Zeal is always ridiculous. “I think I see it all,” he said.

“And won’t they let the man go?”

“There were four persons who swore positively that they were present at the marriage, one of them being the woman who is said to have been married. That is direct evidence. With all our search, we have hitherto found no one to give us any direct evidence to rebut this. Then they brought forward to corroborate these statements, a certain amount of circumstantial evidence,—and among other things this letter.”

“The Caldigate envelope,” said Bagwax, eagerly.

“What you call the Caldigate envelope. It was unnecessary, perhaps; and, if fraudulent, certainly foolish. They would have had their verdict without it.”

“But they did it,” said Bagwax, in a tone of triumph.

“It is a pity, Mr Bagwax, you were not brought up to our profession. You would have made a great lawyer.”

“Oh, Sir John!”

“Yes, they did it. And if it can be proved that they have done it fraudulently, no doubt that fraud will stain their direct evidence. But we have to remember that the verdict has been already obtained.

We are not struggling now with a jury, but with an impassive emblem of sovereign justice.”

“And therefore the real facts will go the further, Sir John.”

“Well argued, Mr Bagwax,—admirably well argued. If you should ever be called, I hope I may not have you against me very often. But I will think of it all. You can take the envelopes away with you, because you have impressed me vividly with all that they can tell me. My present impression is, that you had better take the journey. But within the next few days I will give a little more thought to it, and you shall hear from me.” Then he put out his hand, which was a courtesy Mr Bagwax had never before enjoyed. “You may believe me, Mr Bagwax, when I say that I have come across many remarkable men in many cases which have fallen into my hands,—but that I have rarely encountered a man whom I have more thoroughly respected than I do you.”

Mr Bagwax went away to his own lodging exulting,—but more than ever resolved that the journey to Sydney was unnecessary. As usual, he spent a large portion of that afternoon in contemplating the envelopes; and then, as he was doing so, another idea struck him,—an idea which made him tear his hairs with disgust because it had not occurred to him before. There was now opened to him a new scope of inquiry, an altogether different matter of evidence. But the idea was by far too important to be brought in and explained at the fag-end of a chapter.

CHAPTER XLIX.—ALL THE SHANDS.

There had been something almost approaching to exultation at Babington when the tidings of Caldigate’s alleged Australian wife were

first heard there. As the anger had been great that Julia should be rejected, so had the family congratulation been almost triumphant when

the danger which had been escaped was appreciated. There had been something of the same feeling at Pollington among the Shands,—who had no doubt allowed themselves to think that Maria had been ill treated by John Caldigate. He ought to have married Maria,—at least such was the opinion of the ladies of the family, who were greatly impressed with the importance of the little book which had been carried away. But in regard to the Australian marriage, they had differed among themselves. That Maria should have escaped the terrible doom which had befallen Mrs Bolton's daughter, was, of course, a source of comfort. But Maria herself would never believe the evil story. John Caldigate had not been,—well, perhaps not quite true to her. So much she acknowledged gently with the germ of a tear in her eye. But she was quite sure that he would not have married Hester Bolton while another wife was living in Australia. She arose almost to enthusiasm as she vindicated his character from so base a stain. He had been, perhaps, a little unstable in his affections,—as men are so commonly. But not even when the jury found their verdict, could she be got to believe that the John Caldigate whom she had known would have betrayed a girl whom he loved as he was supposed to have betrayed Hester Bolton. The mother and sisters, who knew the softness of Maria's disposition,—and who had been more angry than their sister with the man who had been wicked enough to carry away Thomson's 'Seasons' in his portmanteau without marrying the girl who had put it there,—would not agree to this. The verdict, at any rate, was a verdict. John Caldigate was in prison. The poor young woman with her infant was a nameless, unfortunate creature. All this might have happened

to their Maria. "I should always have believed him innocent," said Maria, wiping away the germ of the tear with her knuckle.

The matter was very often discussed in the doctor's house at Pollington,—as it was, indeed, by the public generally, and especially in the eastern counties. But in this house there was a double interest attached to it. In the first place, there was Maria's escape,—which the younger girls were accustomed to talk of as having been "almost miraculous;" and then there was Dick's absolute disappearance. It had been declared at the trial, on behalf of Caldigate, that if Dick could have been put into the witness-box, he would have been able to swear that there had been no such marriage ceremony as that which the four witnesses had elaborately described. On the other hand, the woman and Crinkett had sworn boldly that Dick Shand, though not present at the marriage, had been well aware that it had taken place; and that Dick, could his evidence have been secured, would certainly have been a witness on their side. He had been outside the tent,—so said the woman,—when the marriage was being performed, and had refused to enter, by way of showing his continued hostility to an arrangement which he had always opposed. But when the woman said this, it was known that Dick Shand would not appear, and the opinion was general that Dick had died in his poverty and distress. Men who sink to be shepherds in Australia because they are noted drunkards, generally do die. The constrained abstinence of perhaps six months in the wilderness is agonising at first, and nearly fatal. Then the poor wretch rushes to the joys of an orgy with ten or fifteen pounds in his pocket; and the stuff which is given to him as brandy soon puts an end to his

sufferings. There was but little doubt that such had been the fate of Dick,—unless, perhaps, in the bosom of Maria and of his mother.

It was known too at Pollington, as well as elsewhere, in the month of August, that efforts were still to be made with the view of upsetting the verdict. Something had crept out to the public as to the researches made by Bagwax, and allusions had been frequent as to the unfortunate absence of Dick Shand. The betting, had there been betting, would no doubt have been in favour of the verdict. The four witnesses had told their tale in a straightforward way; and though they were, from their characters, not entitled to perfect credit, still their evidence had in no wise been shaken. They were mean, dishonest folk, no doubt. They had taken Caldigate's money, and had still gone on with the prosecution. Even if there had been some sort of a marriage, the woman should have taken herself off when she had received her money, and left poor Hester to enjoy her happiness, her husband, and her home at Bolton. That was the general feeling. But it was hardly thought that Bagwax, with his envelope, would prevail over Judge Bramber in the mind of the Secretary of State. Probably there had been a marriage. But it was singular that the two men who could have given unimpeachable evidence on the matter should both have vanished out of the world; Allan, the minister,—and Dick Shand, the miner and shepherd.

"What will she do when he comes out?" Maria asked. Mrs Rewble, — Harriet, — the curate's wife, was there. Mr Rewble, as curate, found it convenient to make frequent visits to his father-in-law's house. And Mrs Posttlethwaite, — Matilda, — was with them, as Mr Posttlethwaite's business in

the soap line caused him to live at Pollington. And there were two unmarried sisters, Fanny and Jane. Mrs Rewble was by this time quite the matron, and Mrs Posttlethwaite was also the happy mother of children. But Maria was still Maria. Fanny already had a string to her bow,—and Jane was expectant of many strings.

"She ought to go back to her father and mother, of course," said Mrs Rewble, indignantly.

"I know I wouldn't," said Jane.

"You know nothing about it, miss, and you ought not to speak of such a thing," said the curate's wife. Jane at this made a grimace which was intended to be seen only by her sister Fanny.

"It is very hard that two loving hearts should be divided," said Maria.

"I never thought so much of John Caldigate as you did," said Mrs Posttlethwaite. "He seems to have been able to love a good many young women all at the same time."

"It's like tasting a lot of cheeses, till you get the one that suits you," said Jane. This offended the elder sister so grievously that she declared she did not know what their mother was about, to allow such liberty to the girls, and then suggested that the conversation should be changed.

"I'm sure I did not say anything wrong," said Jane, "and I suppose it is like that. A gentleman has to find out whom he likes best. And as he liked Miss Bolton best, I think it's a thousand pities they should be parted."

"Ten thousand pities!" said Maria, enthusiastically.

"Particularly as there is a baby," said Jane,—upon which Mrs Rewble was again very angry.

"If Dick were to come home, he'd clear it all up at once," said Mrs Posttlethwaite.

"Dick will never come home," said Matilda, mournfully.

"Never!" said Mrs Rewble. "I am afraid that he has expiated all his indiscretions. It should make us who were born girls thankful that we have not been subjected to the same temptations."

"I should like to be a man all the same," said Jane.

"You do not at all know what you are saying," replied the monitor. "How little have you realised what poor Dick must have suffered! I wonder when they are going to let us have tea. I'm almost famished." Mrs Rewble was known in the family for having a good appetite. They were sitting at this moment round a table on the lawn, at which they intended to partake of their evening meal. The doctor might or might not join them. Mrs Shand, who did not like the open air, would have hers sent to her in the drawing-room. Mr Rewble would certainly be there. Mr Postlethwaite, who had been home to his dinner, had gone back to the soap-works. "Don't you think, Jane, if you were to go in, you could hurry them?" Then Jane went in and hurried the servant.

"There's a strange man with papa," said Jane, as she returned.

"There are always strange men with papa," said Fanny. "I dare say he has come to have his tooth out." For the doctor's practice was altogether general. From a baby to a back-tooth, he attended to everything now, as he had done forty years ago.

"But this man isn't like a patient. The door was half open, and I saw papa holding him by both hands."

"A lunatic!" exclaimed Mrs Rewble, thinking that Mr Rewble ought to be sent at once to her father's assistance.

"He was quite quiet, and just for a moment I could see papa's face. It wasn't a patient at all. Oh, Maria!"

"What is it, child?" asked Mrs Rewble.

"I do believe that Dick has come back."

They all jumped up from their seats suddenly. Then Mrs Rewble reseated herself. "Jane is such a fool!" she said.

"I do believe it," said Jane. "He had yellow trousers on, as if he had come from a long way off. And I'm sure papa was very glad,—why should he take both his hands?"

"I feel as though my legs were sinking under me," said Maria.

"I don't think it possible for a moment," said Mrs Rewble. "Maria, you are so romantic! You would believe anything."

"It is possible," said Mrs Postlethwaite.

"If you will remain here, I will go into the house and inquire," said Mrs Rewble. But it did not suit the others to remain there. For a moment the suggestion had been so awful that they had not dared to stir; but when the elder sister slowly moved towards the door which led into the house from the garden, they all followed her. Then suddenly they heard a scream, which they knew to come from their mother. "I believe it is Dick," said Mrs Rewble, standing in the doorway so as to detain the others. "What ought we to do?"

"Let me go in," said Jane, impetuously. "He is my brother."

Maria was already dissolved in tears. Mrs Postlethwaite was struck dumb by the awfulness of the occasion, and clung fast to her sister Matilda.

"It will be like one from the grave," said Mrs Rewble, solemnly.

"Let me go in," repeated Jane,

impetuously. Then she pushed by her sisters, and was the first to enter the house. They all followed her into the hall, and there they found their mother supported in the arms of the man who wore the yellow trousers. Dick Shand had in truth returned to his father's house.

The first thing to do with a returned prodigal is to kiss him, and the next to feed him; and therefore Dick was led away at once to the table on the lawn. But he gave no sign of requiring the immediate slaughter of a fatted calf. Though he had not exactly the appearance of a well-to-do English gentleman, he did not seem to be in want. The yellow trousers were of strong material, and in good order, made of that colour for colonial use, probably with the idea of expressing some contempt for the dingy hues which prevail among the legs of men at home. He wore a very large checked waistcoat, and a stout square coat of the same material. There was no look of poverty, and no doubt he had that day eaten a substantial dinner; but the anxious mother was desirous of feeding him immediately, and whispered to Jane some instructions as to cold beef, which was to be added to the tea and toast.

As they examined him, holding him by the arms and hands, and gazing up into his face, the same idea occurred to all of them. Though they knew him very well now, they would hardly have known him had they met him suddenly in the streets. He seemed to have grown fifteen years older during the seven years of his absence. His face had become thin and long and almost hollow. His beard went all round under his chin, and was clipped into the appearance of a stiff thick hedge—equally thick, and equally broad, and equally protrusive at all

parts. And within this enclosure it was shorn. But his mouth had sunk in, and his eyes. In colour he was almost darker than brown. You would have said that his skin had been tanned black, but for the infusion of red across it here and there. He seemed to be in good present health, but certainly bore the traces of many hardships. "And here you are all just as I left you," he said, counting up his sisters.

"Not exactly," said Mrs Rewble, remembering her family. "And Matilda has got two."

"Not husbands, I hope," said Dick.

"Oh, Dick, that is so like you!" said Jane, getting up and kissing him again in her delight. Then Mr Rewble came forward, and the brothers-in-law renewed their old acquaintance.

"It seems just like the other day," said Dick, looking round upon the rose-bushes.

"Oh my boy! my darling, darling boy!" said the mother, who had hurried up-stairs for her shawl, conscious of her rheumatism even amidst the excitement of her son's return. "Oh, Dick, this is the happiest day of all my life! Wouldn't you like something better than tea?" This she said with many memories and many thoughts; but still, with a mother's love, unable to refrain from offering what she thought her son would wish to have.

"There ain't anything better," said Dick, very solemnly.

"Nothing half so good to my thinking," said Mrs Rewble, imagining that by a word in season she might help the good work.

The mother's eyes were filled with tears, but she did not dare to speak a word. Then there was a silence for a few moments. "Tell us all about it, Dick," said the

father. "There's whisky inside if you like it." Dick shook his head solemnly,—but, as they all thought, with a certain air of regret. "Tell us what you have to say," repeated the doctor.

"I'm sworn off these two years."

"Touched nothing for two years?" said the mother exultingly, with her arms and shawl again round her son's neck.

"A teetotaller?" said Maria.

"Anything you like to call it'; only, what a gentleman's habits are in that respect needn't be made the subject of general remark." It was evident he was a little sore, and Jane therefore offered him a dish full of gooseberries. He took the plate in his hand and ate them assiduously for a while in silence, as though unconscious of what he was doing. "You know all about it now, don't you?"

"Oh my dearest boy!" ejaculated the mother.

"You didn't get better gooseberries than those on your travels," said the doctor, calling him back to the condition of the world around him.

Then he told them of his adventures. For two terrible years he had been a shepherd on different sheep-runs up in Queensland. Then he had found employment on a sugar plantation, and had superintended the work of a gang of South Sea Islanders,—Canakers they are called,—men who are brought into the colony from the islands of the Pacific,—and who return thence to their homes generally every three years, much to the regret of their employers. In the transit of these men agents are employed, and to this service Dick had, after a term, found himself promoted. Then it had come to pass that he had remained for a period on one of these islands, with the view of persuading the men to

emigrate and re-emigrate; and had thus been resident among them for more than a couple of years. They had used him well, and he had liked the islands,—having lived in one of them without seeing another European for many months. Then the payments which had from time to time been made to him by the Queensland planters were stopped, and his business, such as it had been, came to an end. He had found himself with just sufficient money to bring him home; and here he was.

"My boy, my darling boy!" exclaimed his mother again, as though all their joint troubles were now over.

The doctor remembered the adage of the rolling stone, and felt that the return of a son at the age of thirty, without any means of maintaining himself, was hardly an unalloyed blessing. He was not the man to turn a son out of doors. He had always broadened his back to bear the full burden of his large family. But even at this moment he was a little melancholy as he thought of the difficulty of finding employment for the wearer of those yellow trousers. How was it possible that a man should continue to live an altogether idle life at Pollington and still remain a teetotaller? "Have you any plans I can help you in now?" he asked.

"Of course he'll remain at home for a while before he thinks of anything," said the mother.

"I suppose I must look about me," said Dick. "By the by, what has become of John Caldigate?"

They all at once gazed at each other. It could hardly be that he did not in truth know what had become of John Caldigate.

"Haven't you heard?" asked Maria.

"Of course he has heard," said Mrs Rewble.

"You must have heard," said the mother.

"I don't in the least know what you are talking about. I have heard nothing at all."

In very truth he had heard nothing of his old friend,—not even that he had returned to England. Then by degrees the whole story was told to him. "I know that he was putting a lot of money together," said Dick, enviously. "Married Hester Bolton? I thought he would! Bigamy! Euphemia Smith! Married before! Certainly not at the diggings."

"He wasn't married up at Ahalala?" asked the doctor.

"To Euphemia Smith? I was there when they quarrelled, and when she went into partnership with Crinkett. I am sure there was no such marriage. John Caldigate in prison for bigamy? And he paid them twenty thousand pounds? The more fool he!"

"They all say that."

"But it's an infernal plant. As sure as my name is Richard Shand John Caldigate never married that woman."

CHAPTER L.—AGAIN AT SIR JOHN'S CHAMBERS.

And this was the man as to whom it had been acknowledged that his evidence, if it could be obtained, would be final. The return of Dick himself was to the Shands an affair so much more momentous than the release of John Caldigate from prison, that for some hours or so the latter subject was allowed to pass out of sight. The mother got him up-stairs and asked after his linen,—vain inquiry,—and arranged for his bed, turning all the little Rewbles into one small room. In the long-run, grandmothers are more tender to their grandchildren than their own offspring. But at this moment Dick was predominant. How grand a thing to have her son returned to her, and such a son,—a teetotaller of two years' growth, who had seen all the world of the Pacific Ocean! As he could not take whisky-and-water, would he like ginger-beer before he went to bed,—or arrowroot? Dick decided in favour of ginger-beer, and consented to be embraced again.

It was, I think, to Maria's credit that she was the first to bring back the conversation to John Caldigate's marriage. "Was she a very hor-

rible woman?" Maria asked, referring to Euphemia Smith.

"There were a good many of 'em out there, greedy after gold," said Dick; "but she beat 'em all; and she was awfully clever."

"In what way, Dick?" asked Mrs Rewble. "Because she does not seem to me to have done very well with herself."

"She knew more about shares than any man of them all. But I think she just drank a little. It was that which disgusted Caldigate."

"He had been very fond of her?" suggested Maria.

"I never knew a man so taken with a woman." Maria blushed, and Mrs Rewble looked round at her younger sisters as though desirous that they should be sent to bed. "All that began on board the ship. Then he was fool enough to run after her down to Sydney; and of course she followed him up to the mines."

"I don't know why, of course," said Mrs Postlethwaite, defending her sex generally.

"Well, she did. And he was going to marry her. He did mean to marry her;—there's no doubt of

that. But it was a queer kind of life we lived up there."

"I suppose so," said the doctor. Mrs Rewble again looked at the girls and then at her mother; but Mrs Shand was older and less timid than her married daughter. Mrs Rewble when a girl herself had never been sent away, and was now a pattern of female discretion.

"And she," continued Dick, "as soon as she had begun to finger the scrip, thought of nothing but gold. She did not care much for marriage just then, because she fancied the stuff wouldn't belong to herself. She became largely concerned in the 'Old-Stick-in-the-Mud.' That was Crinkett's concern, and there were times at which I thought she would marry him. Then Caldigate got rid of her altogether. That was before I went away."

"He never married her?" asked the doctor.

"He certainly hadn't married her when I left Nobble in June '73."

"You can swear to that, Dick?"

"Certainly I can. I was with him every day. But there wasn't any one round there who didn't know how it was. Crinkett himself knew it."

"Crinkett is one of the gang against him."

"And there was a man named Adamson. Adamson knew."

"He's another of the conspirators," said the doctor.

"They won't dare to say before me," declared Dick, stoutly, "that Mrs Smith and John Caldigate had become man and wife before June '73. And they hated one another so much then, that it is impossible they should have come together since. I can swear they were not married up to June '73."

"You'll have to swear it," said the doctor, "and that with as little delay as possible."

All this took place towards the end of August, about five weeks after the trial, and a day or two subsequent to the interview between Bagwax and the Attorney-General. Bagwax was now vehemently prosecuting his inquiries as to that other idea which had struck him, and was at this very moment glowing with the anticipation of success, and at the same time broken-hearted with the conviction that he never would see the pleasant things of New South Wales.

On the next morning, under the auspices of his father, Dick Shand wrote the following letter to Mr Seely, the attorney.

"POLLINGTON, 30th August 187-.

"SIR,—I think it right to tell you that I reached my father's house in this town late yesterday evening. I have come direct from one of the South Sea Islands *viâ* Honolulu and San Francisco, and have not yet been in England forty-eight hours. I am an old friend of Mr John Caldigate, and went with him from England to the gold-digging in New South Wales. My name will be known to you, as I am now aware that it was frequently mentioned in the course of the late trial. It will probably seem odd to you that I had never even heard of the trial till I reached my father's house last night. I did not know that Caldigate had married Miss Bolton, nor that Euphemia Smith had claimed him as her husband.

"I am able and willing to swear that they had not become man and wife up to June 1873, and that no one at Ahalala or Nobble conceived them to be man and wife. Of course, they had lived together. But everybody knew all about it. Some time before June,—early, I should say, in that autumn,—there had been a quarrel. I am sure

they were at daggers drawn with each other all that April and May in respect to certain mining shares, as to which Euphemia Smith behaved very badly. I don't think it possible that they should ever have come together again; but in May '73,—which is the date I have heard named,—they certainly were not man and wife.

"I have thought it right to inform you of this immediately on my return,—and am your obedient servant,
RICHARD SHAND."

Mr Seely, when he received this letter, found it to be his duty to take it at once to Sir John Joram, up in London. He did not believe Dick Shand. But then he had put no trust in Bagwax, and had been from the first convinced, in his own mind, that Caldigate had married the woman. As soon as it was known to him that his client had paid twenty thousand pounds to Crinkett and the woman, he was quite sure of the guilt of his client. He had done the best for Caldigate at the trial, as he would have done for any other client; but he had never felt any of that enthusiasm which had instigated Sir John. Now that Caldigate was in prison, Mr Seely thought that he might as well be left there quietly, trusting to the verdict, trusting to Judge Bramber, and trusting still more strongly on his own early impressions. This letter from Dick,—whom he knew to have been a ruined drunkard, a disgrace to his family, and an outcast from society,—was to his thinking just such a letter as would be got up in such a case, in the futile hope of securing the succour of a Secretary of State. He was sure that no Secretary of State would pay the slightest attention to such a letter. But still it would be necessary that he should show it to Sir John; and as a trip

to London was not disagreeable to his professional mind, he started with it on the very day of its receipt.

"Of course we must have his deposition on oath," said Sir John.

"You think it will be worth while?"

"Certainly. I am more convinced than ever that there was no marriage. That post-office clerk has been with me,—Bagwax,—and has altogether convinced me."

"I didn't think so much of Bagwax, Sir John."

"I daresay not, Mr Seely;—an absurdly energetic man,—one of those who destroy by their over-zeal all the credit which their truth and energy ought to produce. But he has, I think, convinced me that that letter could not have passed through the Sydney post-office in May '73."

"If so, Sir John, even that is not much,—towards upsetting a verdict."

"A good deal, I think, when the character of the persons are considered. Now comes this man, whom we all should have believed, had he been present, and tells this story. You had better get hold of him and bring him to me, Mr Seely."

Then Mr Seely hung up his hat in London for three or four days, and sent to Pollington for Dick Shand. Dick Shand obeyed the order, and both of them waited together upon Sir John. "You have come back at a very critical point of time for your friend," said the barrister.

Dick had laid aside the coat and waistcoat with the broad checks, and the yellow trousers, and had made himself look as much like an English gentleman as the assistance of a ready-made-clothes shop at Pollington would permit. But still he did not quite look like a man

who had spent three years at Cambridge. His experiences among the gold-diggings, then his period of maddening desolation as a Queensland shepherd, and after that his life among the savages in a South Sea island, had done much to change him. Sir John and Mr Seely together almost oppressed him. But still he was minded to speak up for his friend. Caldgate had, upon the whole, been very good to him, and Dick was honest. "He has been badly used any way," he said.

"You have had no intercourse with any of his friends since you have been home, I think?" This question Sir John asked because Mr Seely had suggested that this appearance of the man at this special moment might not improbably be what he called "a plant."

"I have had no intercourse with anybody, sir. I came here last Friday, and I hadn't spoken a word to anybody before that. I didn't know that Caldgate had been in trouble at all. My people at Pollington were the first to tell me about it."

"Then you wrote to Mr Seely? You had heard of Mr Seely?"

"The governor,—that's my father,—he had heard of Mr Seely. I wrote first as he told me. They knew all about it at Pollington as well as you do."

"You were surprised, then, when you heard the story?"

"Knocked off my pins, sir. I never was so much taken aback in my life. To be told that John Caldgate had married Euphemia Smith after all that I had seen,—and that he had been married to her in May '73! I knew, of course, that it was all a got-up thing. And he's in prison?"

"He is in prison, certainly."

"For bigamy?"

"Indeed he is, Mr Shand."

"And how about his real wife?"

"His real wife, as you call her——"

"She is, as sure as my name is Richard Shand."

"It is on behalf of that lady that we are almost more anxious than for Mr Caldgate himself. In this matter she has been perfectly innocent; and whoever may have been the culprit,—or culprits,—she has been cruelly ill-used."

"She'll have her husband back again, of course," said Dick.

"That will depend in part upon what faith the judge who tried the case may place in your story. Your deposition shall be taken, and it will be my duty to submit it to the Secretary of State. He will probably be actuated by the weight which this further evidence will have upon the judge who heard the former evidence. You will understand, Mr Shand, that your word will be opposed to the words of four other persons."

"Four perjured scoundrels," said Dick, with energy.

"Just so,—if your story be true."

"It is true, sir," said Dick, with much anger in his tone.

"I hope so,—with all my heart. You are on the same side with us, you know. I only want to make you understand how much ground there may be for doubt. It is not easy to upset a verdict. And, I fear, many righteous verdicts would be upset if the testimony of one man could do it. Perhaps you will be able to prove that you only arrived at Liverpool on Saturday night."

"Certainly I can."

"You cannot prove that you had not heard of the case before."

"Certainly I can. I can swear it." Sir John smiled. "They all knew that at Pollington. They told me of it. The governor told me about Mr Seely, and made me write the letter."

"That would be evidence," said Sir John.

"Heavens on earth! I tell you I was struck all on a heap when I heard it, just as much as if they had said he'd been hung for murder. You put Crinkett and me together and then you'll know. I suppose you think somebody's paying me for this,—that I've got a regular tip."

"Not at all, Mr Shand. And I quite understand that it should be difficult for you to understand. When a man sees a thing clearly himself, he cannot always realise the fact that others do not see it also. I think I perceive what you have to tell us, and we are very much obliged to you for coming forward so immediately. Perhaps you would not mind sitting in the other room for five minutes while I say a word to Mr Seely."

"I can go away altogether."

"Mr Seely will be glad to see you again with reference to the deposition you will have to make. You shall not be kept waiting long." Then Dick returned, with a sore heart, feeling half inclined to blaze out in wrath against the great advocate. He had come forward to tell a plain story, having nothing to gain, paying his railway fare and other expenses out of his own, or rather out of his father's pocket, and was told he would not be believed! It is always hard to make an honest witness understand that it may be the duty of others to believe him to be a liar, and Dick Shand did not understand it now.

"There was no Australian marriage," Sir John said, as soon as he was alone with Mr Seely.

"You think not?"

"My mind is clear about it. We must get that man out, if it be only for the sake of the lady."

"It is so very easy, Sir John, to have a story like that made up."

"I have had to do with a good many made-up stories, Mr Seely;—and with a good many true stories."

"Of course, Sir John;—no man with more."

"He might be a party to making up a story. There is nothing that I have seen in him to make me sure that he could not come forward with a determined perjury. I shouldn't think it, but it would be possible. But his father and mother and sisters wouldn't join him." Dick had told the story of the meeting on the lawn at great length. "And had it been a plot, he couldn't have imposed upon them. He wouldn't have brought them into it. And who would have got at him to arrange the plot?"

"Old Caldigate."

Sir John shook his head. "Neither old Caldigate nor young Caldigate knew anything of that kind of work. And then his story tallies altogether with my hero Bagwax. Of Bagwax I am quite sure. And as Shand corroborates Bagwax, I am nearly sure of him also. You must take his deposition, and let me have it. It should be rather full, as it may be necessary to hear the depositions also of the doctor and his wife. We shall have to get him out."

"You know best, Sir John."

"We shall have to get him out, Mr Seely, I think," said Sir John, rising from his chair. Then Mr Seely took his leave, as was intended.

Mr Seely was not at all concerned. He was quite willing that John Caldigate should be released from prison, and that the Australian marriage should be so put out of general credit in England as to allow the young people to live in comfort at Folking as man and wife. But he liked to feel that he knew better himself. He would have been quite content that Mrs John Caldigate should be Mrs John

Caldigate to all the world,—that all the world should be imposed on,—so that he was made subject to no imposition. In this matter, Sir John appeared to him to be no wider awake than a mere layman. It was clear to Mr Seely that Dick Shand's story was "got up,"—and very well got up. He had no pang of conscience as to using it. But when it came to believing it, that was quite another thing. The man turning up exactly at the moment! And such a man! And then his pretending never to have heard of a case so famous! Never to have heard this story of his most intimate friend! And then his notorious poverty! Old Caldigate would of course be able to buy such a man. And then Sir John's fatuity as to Bagwax! He could hardly bring himself to believe that Sir John was quite in earnest. But he was well aware that Sir John would know,—no one better,—by what arguments such a verdict as had been given might be practically set aside. The verdict would remain. But a pardon, if a pardon could be got from the Secretary of State, would make the condition of the husband and wife the same as though there had been no verdict. The indignities which they had already suffered, would simply produce for them the affectionate commendation of all England. Mr Seely felt all that, and was not at all averse to a pardon. He was not at all disposed to be severe on old Caldigate senior, if, as he thought,

Caldigate senior had bribed this convenient new witness. But it was too much to expect that he should believe it all himself.

"You must come with me, Mr Shand," he said, "and we must take your story down in writing. Then you must swear to it before a magistrate."

"All right, Mr Seely."

"We must be very particular, you know."

"I needn't be particular at all;—and as to what Sir John Joram said, I felt half inclined to punch his head."

"That wouldn't have helped us."

"It was only that I thought of Caldigate in prison that I didn't do it. Because I have been roaming about the world, not always quite as well off as himself, he tells me that he doesn't believe my word."

"I don't think he said that."

"He didn't quite dare; but what he said was as bad. He told me that some one else wouldn't believe it. I don't quite understand what it is they're not to believe. All I say is, that they two were not married in May '73."

"But about your never having heard of the case till you got home?"

"I never had heard a word about it. One would think that I had done something wrong in coming forward to tell what I know." The deposition, however, was drawn out in due form, at considerable length, and was properly attested before one of the London magistrates.

A SCOTS BISHOP.

THE most attractive phase in the history of every religious denomination is the season of its adversity. No doubt a Church feels a justifiable pride when it can point to annual reports of flourishing progress, to increasing rolls of membership, to swelling subscriptions and endowments, to extensive missionary operations at home, and to imposing efforts among the heathen abroad. But this prosperity is seldom compatible with picturesqueness. If Churches, like corporations, do not grow bloated as they wax rich, the world is apt to qualify its acknowledgment of their success by the imputation of vulgarity. The simple, self-denying, humble spirit of the Great Founder of Christianity is not so apparent, or perhaps the world is not so forcibly compelled to recognise it, as when its testimony bears the seal of stripes or imprisonment. When loaves and fishes are largely agoing, doubts of the disinterestedness of the clergy are mooted, which have no place at a time when there is nothing to gain but much to lose by following the sacred calling. And however zealous priests may be in the days of the Church's success, however disposed to emulate the deeds of confessors and martyrs, the world is apt to think that the extreme virtues which lighted up the darker and more troublous periods are out of place and gratuitous when flouted in the face of a generation that sees little need for their exercise.

The story of the Episcopal Church of Scotland, from its disestablishment at the Revolution until its reconciliation with the house of Hanover, towards the end of the last century, has all the picturesqueness

that an unbroken course of misfortune can lend to it; and the interest which attaches to its struggles is all the stronger that its bishops and priests have never affected to regard themselves as martyrs, but suffered in silence, and meekly submitted to each fresh chastisement as it was laid upon them. Its devotion to the house of Stuart was at once its glory and its bane. Long after every other body of men in Great Britain had given up all hopes of a Jacobite restoration — when even the survivors of the 'Forty-five had begun reluctantly to admit that Charles Edward would never replace George III. upon the throne of Great Britain, — the Chevalier was prayed for as king by the little flocks meeting in quiet corners to hear the service read by some non-juring priest, who did his office at the risk of imprisonment, or even banishment to the colonies, to reward his pains. This fidelity was all the more admirable that their Jacobitism was the only barrier to their toleration and even protection by Government. We have many instances in history where kings have sacrificed their fortunes for the cause of the Church. The Scots Episcopalian Bishops and Presbyters present the only case that occurs to us where the Church has deliberately sacrificed its own interests to those of the Crown; and this political loyalty, maintained in the face of so many obstacles, and in spite of so many temptations to another allegiance, was only equalled by the apostolic simplicity, the earnestness, and the charity of the Episcopal clergy. The lives of such bishops as Low and Jolly and Gleig obliterate centuries, and carry us back for parallels to the days of the

primitive Church; so that Bishop Horne of Norwich paid them no strained compliment when he said that if St Paul were to return to earth again, he would seek the communion of the Scottish Episcopalians as nearest akin to "the people he had been used to."

Not long after the Revolution, Dundee, in one of his letters, jestingly complains that the Scottish prelates were "now become the Kirk invisible." The disestablishment of Episcopacy had completely cut away their resources; their steady refusal to deviate from their allegiance to King James deprived them of any claim on the consideration of Government; and the newly established Presbyterian Church was naturally careful to evict them from any benefices or temporalities that they had not already relinquished. Whig mobs, seizing the unsettled state of the country as an opportunity for rioting, found the Episcopal clergy convenient and safe victims, and "rabbed" them wherever the authorities were weak or winked at their conduct. The noteworthy feature in the course followed by the Episcopalian party was its passive submission to all the hardships both of the law and of popular persecution. Such meekness had hitherto been unknown in Scottish ecclesiastical revolutions. The Covenanters had never hesitated to "take the bent" when Prelacy seemed likely to get the upper hand; while the Cameronians were ready to have recourse to "the sword of the Lord and of Gideon" rather than accept the "Black Indulgence" at the hands of their enemies. And this forbearance was not altogether due to a sense of weakness; for had the Episcopal Church raised a cry of being persecuted, and invoked its supporters to come to its aid, it could have seriously disturbed the peace of the

country. North of the Tay the Episcopalians were undoubtedly the dominant party, and the Roman Catholic chiefs were inclined to champion their cause as bound up with that of the exiled family. We can now appreciate the more Christian, as well as prudent, course which the prelates and clergy adopted, developing as it did so richly among them the higher qualities of Christianity; but their humility was very frequently interpreted by their opponents as pusillanimity, and was made a ground of reproach by the Presbyterians. We can hardly blame the Government for the strict measures that it adopted against a body of its subjects who refused to acknowledge existing authority, any more than we can blame the bishops for not departing from the allegiance that they believed to have the only lawful claim upon them. The times were out of joint, and refused to be set right by either Church or State. Of the activity of the Episcopal clergy in behalf of the house of Stuart there can be no doubt; and that its fruits were not more apparent is simply a proof of their disorganised condition and want of popular influence. The Primus of the Scottish Church was invariably one of the body who officially represented the Chevalier's interests in Scotland, and the exile's authority was the only secular influence which the Episcopal College acknowledged. The insurrections in the 'Fifteen and the 'Forty-five brought the position of the Scottish non-jurors prominently under the notice of the Government; and those measures of relief that they had secured under the sympathetic rule of Queen Anne were forfeited. The proscription which followed these attempts gave the Whig rabble scope for persecution which it was not slow to embrace. Much of the ill-usage heaped upon the clergy was of a

very petty character; but many of them were subjected to real sufferings for discharging their sacred duties. A very common experience was that of worthy Mr Rubrick, the Baron of Bradwardine's chaplain, "when a Whiggish mob destroyed his meeting-house, tore his surplice, and plundered his dwelling-house of four silver spoons, intronitmiting also with his mart and his meal-ark, and with two barrels, one of single and one of double ale, besides three bottles of brandy." But this treatment at the hands of the rabble was tolerant compared with the severity of the enactments which the Government passed against the exercise of Episcopal forms of worship. Not only did the Royal troops pull down the non-juring meeting-houses wherever they found them after the rebellions, but in some cases they appear to have compelled the unfortunate prelatists to destroy their own churches, as at Peterhead after the rising of the 'Fifteen. Local magistracies, anxious to curry favour with Government, aided the military authorities in their quest for non-jurors, and made a merit of inflicting severe penalties upon all priests who fell into their hands. The letters of many of the English officers employed in Scotland between 1715 and 1745 express disgust at the extreme measures which they were forced to employ against the Church to which their own sympathies belonged. The late Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe had a story of an indignant response made by the Colonel of Lord Ancrum's regiment when quartered in Aberdeen after the 'Fifteen. A gentleman, a member of a well-known Whig family in Buchan, had given information against his uncle, a non-juring presbyter, to whose property he was next heir. The clergyman was speedily arrested; and some

days after, the informant, it is to be hoped from feelings of compunction, went to the commandant to inquire what was likely to befall his relative. "Why, sir, he'll be hanged, and you'll be damned," said the officer, turning contemptuously on his heel. After 1745, when the Episcopal clergy had to bear the full brunt of the Government's enmity, the severities to which they were subjected reached the point of persecution. The stern example made of the Scottish nobility and gentry who had been taken in arms against the Government, deterred others who had previously protected the Episcopal clergy from showing them any further countenance. The penal laws against the assembly of more than five persons, or four and a family, from meeting together at a non-juring service, came within a little of extirpating the Scottish Episcopal Church; and but for the faithfulness of its bishops and clergy, the uncomplaining meekness with which they submitted to their stripes, and the bright testimony which they bore to the spirit of Christianity, the disestablished Church would probably have ceased to have a separate existence, and Episcopacy in Scotland have been merged into the conforming English congregations.

The troubles which Skinner, the Aberdeenshire non-juror, and the author of "*Tullochgorum*," went through after the suppression of the last Jacobite rebellion, afford a good example of the sufferings which the Episcopal clergy had to bear about this time. Cumberland's soldiers burnt his little chapel at Longside, and for years he celebrated divine service at an open window in his own cottage, his little flock kneeling devoutly on the grass sward outside; and although Skinner was no Jacobite, and had, in-

deed, incurred the anger of his bishop by agreeing to the command of Government to register his letter of orders, he was seized and cast into jail because his out-of-door flock had exceeded the statutory number. Skinner suffered six months' confinement in Aberdeen prison as late as 1753; and about the same time a large proportion of the northern presbyters were in bonds. Mr Walker, whose memoir of Bishop Gleig we shall presently notice, tells us how three Kincardineshire clergymen were all confined in one cell of the Stonehaven tolbooth during the winter of 1748-49, and how they managed to baptise children, and to comfort their flocks over the prison walls.

"The fishermen's wives from Skate-row might be seen trudging along the beach with their unbaptised infants in their creels wading at the 'Water Yett,' the combined streams of the Carron and the Cowie, which could only be done at the influx of the sea; then clambering over rugged rocks till they reached the back stairs of the tolbooth, where they watched a favourable opportunity for drawing near to their pastor's cell, and securing the bestowal of the baptismal blessing. After divine service on week-days, Mr Troup (one of the imprisoned three) entertained the audience on the bagpipes with the spirit-stirring Jacobite tunes that more than any other cause kept up the national feeling in favour of the just hereditary line of our natural sovereigns."—*Life of Bishop Jolly*, p. 19.

This combination of the bagpipes and the Prayer-book was very characteristic of the Scottish Episcopacy of the period. Its distinctive foundation was quite as much political as religious, and allegiance towards the king *de jure* held a place in the minds of the prelatial clergy scarcely second to their reverence for apostolic order and liturgical forms. And in fact

we cannot disguise the truth that their persecution was more a political than a religious punishment.

The mission of the Episcopal Church in Scotland was at this time involved in the deepest gloom. The overthrow of Jacobitism at Culloden had been so complete, and the news from the Chevalier's court was so disheartening, that no reasonable hope remained of the restoration of the Stuarts; and it could expect no toleration from a king whom it regarded as a usurper, and for whose rule it obstinately refused to pray. And yet in this proscribed and persecuted condition, impoverished, without supporters who could provide even a decent maintenance for the support of the clergy, and with no means of giving its priests a distinctive theological training, the Episcopal Church of Scotland became the nursery of an order of prelates who, by a rare combination of piety, learning, administrative ability, and apostolic poverty, realised more fully the primitive model of a bishop than any other group of prelates, whether Roman or Anglican, with whose history we are acquainted. Among these, the archaic saintliness of Jolly, the far-seeing ability of the Skinners, and the culture and energy of Gleig, are almost the only lights on the rough path of the afflicted Church.

George Gleig, presbyter of Pitvenneam at the time when the fortunes of Episcopacy stood at their very lowest ebb; Bishop of Brechin at the period when the Church, finally disassociated from the cause of the Stuarts, became a legal and tolerated body; and Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church when it was just launching out on that race of wide and extending usefulness which it is now running,—is one of the most central figures among reformed Scottish prelates. He was the last Jacobite Primus of Scot-

land, and the first, we believe, who had taken the oaths to the house of Hanover on his episcopal consecration. He was one of its last surviving prelates who had been trained in the hard school of the penal laws, and who had profited by the stern lessons which he had learned there. It was his fortune to see his beloved Church emerge from obloquy and insignificance to a position of honour and importance from which it could look back with satisfaction to its past trials; and he could cheer himself with the reflection that his own efforts had, with the blessing of Providence, contributed largely towards this happy change. Bishop Gleig, then, is a prominent link between the old and the new—between the picturesque old non-juring Episcopacy of the last days of Jacobitism and of the Prelacy of the present day, which claims all the dignity of a “sister Church” with the Anglican communion, which has sent its orders far and wide over the great continent of America, and which has a very potential voice in all those proposals for the reunion of Catholic Christendom that it has become the fashion of late years to put forward. It would have taken a very commonplace man indeed to have occupied this position without leaving behind him something worthy of record; and when a man of the parts and scholarship of Bishop Gleig filled it, we are confident that the records of the Scottish primacy must bear the impress of strong individuality, and of a firm but liberal mind. A memoir of such a man is due both to his Church and to the world, and *faute des mieux* we are glad to have the serviceable little monograph* which the Rev. Mr Walker, the biographer of Bishop Jolly, has written. Mr Walker has carefully gathered to-

gether and published all the details of Bishop Gleig’s life, has faithfully sketched the part which he took in the reconstitution of the Church, and has given us a just and appreciative estimate of his character as a man and of his work as a prelate. We have read his book with interest; and if we are rather disappointed that the ex-Chaplain-General did not himself give his father’s memoirs to the world, we ought not on that account to be the more disposed to undervalue Mr Walker’s exertions, the unpretending character of which at once conciliates the reader’s confidence and regard.

Gleig was by birth a “man of the Mearns,” a county which the influence of the Marischal family had deeply involved in the troubles of the ‘Fifteen. His grandfather had been “out” in that insurrection, and had evaded the penalties by the not unfrequent expedient of changing his name. Glegg was altered to Gleig, and no one answering to the former designation was forthcoming in answer to King George’s summons. The experience of the ‘Fifteen, and the heavy calamities which it had brought upon so many families of the Mearns, kept Gleig’s father, though a keen Jacobite, from joining the insurgents. The Gleig family seem to have been in comfortable circumstances for Kincardineshire tenant-farmers; and the future Bishop had such a careful education as the parish school and the King’s College of Aberdeen could afford. His university career had been so successful that an Aberdeen chair would have been within his reach could he have submitted to the oaths, and to the subscription to the Confession of Faith; but though such a position would have been one of luxury and ease compared with the penury and privations of an Episcopal presbyter, he did not

* Life of Bishop Gleig. By the Rev. W. Walker. Edinburgh: Douglas.

shrink from embracing the latter career. He had already laid the foundation of an intricate acquaintance with moral and physical science at the university; and when he left it, he gave up his time to theology, especially to patristic literature. There was no regular professional training for candidates for Episcopal ordination in Scotland in those days. They were left to read for themselves; and there do not appear to have been any definite standards set for their guidance. A result of this was, that very irregular and latitudinarian views often prevailed in the Scottish priesthood; while in Aberdeenshire and the Mearns, a by no means inconsiderable number of Episcopalians believed in the extraordinary delusions of Antoinette Bourignon,* the Flemish enthusiast of the seventeenth century. We are not clearly told with whom Gleig prosecuted his theological studies, or whether he had the advantage of any assistance in preparing for ordination, but his works show him to have mastered the great controversies of the Christian Church, and that too from a stand-point which, even in these days of more strictly defined dogma, the Church would accept as orthodox.

Pittenweem and Crail, on the Fifeshire coast of the Firth of Forth, was Gleig's first charge in 1773, and it seems to have been a fairly comfortable one, as Episcopal livings then were. The fury with which the working of the penal laws had been inaugurated was past, but the legal disabilities that still remained were suffi-

ciently serious. King George's soldiers had burned the chapel in 1746, and at both Crail and Pittenweem Gleig had to hold divine service in a barn, or some other available building. His salary was better than most of his contemporaries, and yet could seldom have exceeded £40 a-year. The Kelly and Balcarres families belonged to his congregations, and so he had social advantages that were denied to a great many of his brethren. It was at this time that his strong literary bent, of which he seems to have been early conscious, began to show itself in contributions to the 'Monthly Review,' chiefly on subjects of philosophical and literary criticism. He of course had his share in the revival of letters which was taking place in Scotland at the time; and cut off as he was in a great measure by his profession and politics from the literary circles in the Scottish capital, it was only natural that he should prefer to form a connection that would bring himself before an English audience rather than one of his own countrymen. And as Mr Walker very shrewdly points out, Gleig was thus doing a service both to Scottish literature and to his own Church, by showing that the penal laws had not entirely crushed out its culture. The 'Gentleman's Magazine,' the 'British Critic,' and afterwards the 'Anti-Jacobin,' were all periodicals with which the Presbyterian of Pittenweem had a connection. In the first of these he defended the consecration by the Scots bishops of Dr Seabury, through whom the Episcopal Church in America derives its orders, and thus

* Ministers of the Church of Scotland are still called upon at their ordination to repudiate a belief in Bourignianism, which the majority of them are easily able to do, from their ignorance of its derivation and tenets. But Bourignianism was a heresy of some consequence in the seventeenth century. Its founder professed to be under the immediate inspiration of the Deity, and she asserted that for every fresh conversion to her views, she underwent the physical pains of child-birth. As the number of converts which she personally made in Scotland, as well as on the Continent, was very considerable, she must have had rather a trying time of it.

earned the flattering commendation of the editor. The magazine *honoraria* would prove an opportune "eke" to the Pittenweem offertories, and would put him in a position to extend those benevolences towards his poorer parishioners which are always expected from a minister, however inadequate his means. And he seems to have left a lasting popularity among his people; for his son, the ex-Chaplain-General, says that, long years after, "I was taken as a child, early in the century, to Crail for sea-bathing, and remember the heartiness with which they all received and greeted at their houses their former pastor."

Gleig's talents and public vindication of Scottish Episcopacy naturally soon marked him out for such promotion as the Church could confer; and when he was only a year or two over thirty, the Dunkeld clergy chose him for their diocesan. A Scottish bishopric was not then the dignified and envied position that it has since become, nor does it appear to have been an object of great ambition to the Scottish clergy. These were the days before equal dividends and bishops' palaces were dreamt of, when Oxford saw no comeliness in a Scotch mitre, and when the rewards within the Church were so pitiful that it was not held worth the while to deprive the hard-working Scottish presbyters of them. The Scottish bishop's palace was then in many cases a cottage scarcely superior to the homes of his neighbours the peasantry; and differing from these only in the feature that every available space was generally over-crowded with books. Such were the mansions occupied by Bishops Jolly and Low, the former of whom dispensed with a servant, and employed only the attendance of a mason's wife, "who came every morning, opened his door, made his fire,

arranged his bed, and did any other menial services he required. He prepared his own breakfast, and then was left alone till dinner-time, when the woman was again seen coming down the street, carrying a very small pot in her hand, with a wooden cover on it, and something else beneath her apron, which was the whole preparation for the Bishop's dinner." There was a deal of trouble attached to the office in consequence of the irregular diocesan arrangements of the Church, and also of the too frequent want of unanimity between the College of Bishops and the working clergy. When Gleig was unanimously elected Bishop of Dunkeld in 1786, his modestly expressed wish to be spared the dignity was backed up by the opposition which was made to him personally in another quarter. Bishop John Skinner of Aberdeen, son of the persecuted author of "*Tullochgorum*," was then laying the foundation of that influence in the Episcopal Church which his family maintained for nearly half a century; and he had unfortunately taken offence at some remarks which Gleig had made in an article in the '*Gentleman's Magazine*'—chiefly critical strictures on the Bishop's sermon on the occasion of Dr Seabury's consecration. Gleig, on hearing of Dr Skinner's opposition, withdrew from the office, "to prevent disturbance on my account in this miserable and afflicted Church." The difference that then arose between Gleig and Skinner retarded the elevation of the former to the Episcopate for two-and-twenty years; but it secured for the Episcopal Church a sound and able champion against the personal rule of Skinner, whose clear head and strong judgment were too apt to override the counsel of his colleagues, and to ignore the views of the general body of the clergy.

Both Bishop Skinner and Mr Gleig had been working, each in his own fashion, to obtain a repeal of the penal laws; and when the attempt made by the Episcopal College to secure relief without binding themselves to pray for the King by name failed, as it was bound to do, the Skinners threw the blame upon Gleig, who, they said, had sacrificed a bishop of his own Church on the altar of Canterbury. In this transaction Gleig seems to have had reason entirely on his side. Although much more closely connected by family associations with the cause of the Stuarts than the Skinners were, he had convinced himself how hopeless it was to struggle against the growing popularity of the reigning family. His literary efforts had made Gleig known to the English prelates, and they were prepared to co-operate with him in obtaining the relief of the Scottish Episcopalians upon their recognition of the house of Hanover as a first step on their side. The concessions which would have been secured under Gleig's measure, were far more liberal than the Scottish bishops afterwards succeeded in obtaining; and though there can be no doubt that Gleig's draft bill was the scheme most calculated to serve the Church, we can hardly, at this distance of time, bring ourselves to regret that the Scottish Episcopalians did not depart from their picturesque fidelity to the Stuarts so long as the Chevalier still remained to inherit the divine right to the throne of Britain.

The Chevalier's death brought the first real measure of relief to the non-jurors, freeing them from an impracticable allegiance, and removing the main barrier between them and their fellow-subjects. Charles Edward died in 1788, exactly a century after his luckless grandfather had lost his crown.

Gleig by this time was settled in Stirling—a more prosperous charge than Pittenweem; for with the fruits of his literary work to add to his salary, he was able to marry the youngest daughter of Mr Hamilton of Kilbrackmont, who had been among his Fifeshire parishioners. Here it fell to the lot of Mr Gleig to introduce into the service the prayers for the Royal family, which were so distasteful to the survivors of Culloden. The clergy, as a body, readily took this step; but many of the laity felt their stomachs rise at hearing the Elector of Hanover prayed for as their “Most Gracious Sovereign Lord, King George.” At the outset numbers left the churches in disgust; others remained, and expressed dissent from the prayer by ominous coughing, or by contemptuously blowing their noses. “Ladies slammed their prayer-books and yawned audibly at the prayer for King George.”

“When King George was first prayed for by name in Meiklefolia church, Charles Halket of Inveramsay sprung to his feet, vowed he would never pray for ‘that Hanoverian villain,’ and instantly left the church, which he did not re-enter for twenty years. A Mr Rogers of St Andrew's, Aberdeen, said Bishop Skinner might ‘pray the cknees aff his breeks’ before he would join him in praying for King George.”—Bishop Jolly, p. 41, note.

We do not hear of any disturbances in the Stirling congregation, and the tact of the incumbent had probably been successfully applied to the removal of prejudices; for Gleig appears to have, long before this, sunk his Jacobite predilections in a loyal desire to reconcile his Church with the reigning dynasty. A few ultra-Jacobites, like Oliphant of Gask, might still hold by Henry IX., who, “were he even a Mahumetan or a Turkish priest,” was still the legitimate heir to a throne; but

all sensible men saw that a Roman cardinal would never reign over Britain. Besides, George III. was showing himself a good Churchman and a sound Tory; and these virtues were fast effacing all disagreeable recollections of the two preceding reigns.

With the introduction of King George's name into the Scottish liturgy, the most picturesque, if the most painful, period of the Church's history comes to an end. Its task was now to organise an administration for itself, to provide churches and funds, and to retrieve the position and influence that it had sacrificed for the sake of the house of Stuart. It is with Mr Gleig, and not with the history of the Episcopal Church, that we are now concerned; and we shall only refer to the latter in so far as it connects itself with the subject of this paper.

The difference between Bishop Skinner, who had now succeeded to the primacy of the Church, and Gleig, was probably a reason why the latter, during his incumbency at Stirling, took very little part in the public councils of the Episcopalians that followed the removal of the penal laws. His chief ambition at this time seems to have been to discharge the duties of a zealous parish priest, and to add to the reputation he had already won as a man of letters.

His labours were signally successful in gathering round him a large congregation, for whom he succeeded in raising a church capable of containing 200 worshippers. His sermons must have been far above the average of those delivered from Episcopalian pulpits about this time—that of the Cowgate in Edinburgh, which was then filled by the elder Alison, of course, excepted; for when republished, they attracted the favourable notice of

the English reviewers, and in particular, of the 'Anti-Jacobin,' who characterises Gleig as "the most learned and correct of the Scotch *literati*,"—no slight compliment when it is remembered that Robertson and Dugald Stewart were then his contemporaries. He had formed a close connection with the 'Encyclopedia Britannica,' the second edition of which was then in course of preparation; and from being its prime adviser on theology and metaphysics, he ultimately stepped into the editorship, and completed the work. He was also a contributor to the 'British Critic' and the 'Anti-Jacobin,' and was regarded as a leading man in the world of English letters; for he does not appear to have sought to make a place for himself nearer home. Distinctions and more substantial rewards followed; and though he had been denied a seat in the College of Bishops, Dr Gleig was in himself a power in the Scottish Episcopal Church, which the Primus would not bend himself to conciliate, and which he could not venture openly to defy. The strong character of Primus Skinner, and the jealousy with which he guarded the Episcopal College from the admission of any member who might go into opposition to his own policy, had created dissatisfaction among a large number of presbyters, especially those of the southern dioceses; and these looked to Dr Gleig as the champion of their party. His connection with the reviews made him rather an object of dread to his opponents, and though they could keep him out of the Episcopal College, they could not keep him from criticising its doings in journals circulating among English Churchmen, before whom Scottish bishops were naturally anxious that their doings should be represented in the best light. It cannot, however, be said that Dr Gleig abused his power;

for when he found that his connection with the 'Anti-Jacobin' was implicating him in all its reflections upon Scottish Episcopacy, he formally closed his connection with that periodical. "This" (his alliance with the 'Anti-Jacobin') "procured to me so much coldness from different persons whose friendship I had long enjoyed and highly valued, and was attended with other disagreeable circumstances of more importance, that I found myself under the necessity of withdrawing my regular contributions from the 'Anti-Jacobin,' and circulating among my friends an assurance that I had done so." This step involved considerable self-denial, for the 'Anti-Jacobin' was then in the zenith of its popularity, and a power in the press of the day.

The persistent exclusion of a clergyman of Dr Gleig's position and abilities from the Episcopate in course came to be a scandal in the Church. Twice after his first election did majorities of the See of Dunkeld choose him for their bishop, and as often was their choice overruled by the influence of the Primus. We would be loath to charge so exemplary a prelate as Primus Skinner with being influenced by personal rancour, but he appears to have had a remarkable aptitude for reconciling his antipathies to Gleig with his duty to the Church. Dr Gleig seems to have accepted his rejections by the Episcopal College with entire indifference, feeling, doubtless, that the general recognition which his abilities were receiving from every other quarter would not be affected by the conduct of the Scottish Episcopal bench. On the occasion of his second election to the bishopric of Dunkeld, in 1792, he does appear to have felt some resentment at the illegal conduct of the College in transferring the votes recorded for

him to its own nominee, a young and untried man who had barely reached the canonical age. On this occasion he recorded a resolution that he would never allow himself to be subjected to similar insult. In course of time, however, it became felt, by all who had the interests of the Church at heart, that it was imperatively necessary to promote Dr Gleig's election to a bishopric for the credit of the Episcopal College itself. He was proposed for the diocese of Edinburgh by Dr Sandford, who was himself elected as a means of drawing the English and Scottish Episcopalians more closely together, much to Dr Gleig's own satisfaction. On the third occasion when the Dunkeld presbyters made choice of him as their diocesan in 1808, Dr Gleig actively co-operated with the efforts of the Primus to upset the election, in order to secure the see for his young friend Mr Torry, in whose advancement he seems to have taken an earnest interest. Mr Torry was naturally unwilling to accept office to the prejudice of his friend and in opposition to the choice of the majority of the presbyters, and Dr Gleig himself had to use his influence to get him to consent to being elected.

"Be assured, my dear sir," writes Dr Gleig to him, "that it will give me unfeigned pleasure to see you Bishop of Dunkeld; and let not something like a preference given by the clergy to me prejudice you against accepting of an office of which Mr Skinner assures me that *all* acknowledge you worthy, at the very instant that three of them voted for me. This is not a time for standing on punctilio or delicacy of feeling; and the clergy of Dunkeld are the more excusable for betraying a partiality for me from their knowledge of the manner in which I was formerly treated when elected to that see, and when I could have been of infinitely greater use to the Church there than I could now be as a bishop."

Hardly, however, had the Dunkeld election been settled, when Dr Gleig received the news that the Brechin presbyters had unanimously chosen him as coadjutor to their aged bishop; and this time the Primus did not venture to thwart the election of the clergy.

But though Primus Skinner could not go the length of keeping Gleig out of the Episcopate, he insisted on him submitting to a test which had never before been formally demanded of a Scottish bishop, and which the Primus probably hoped Gleig would resist, and thus give him an opportunity of cancelling the election for his contumacy. The test incident led to a very pretty passage of arms between the Primus and the Bishop-designate, in which certainly Bishop Skinner did not get the best of it. The Episcopal Church of Scotland possesses two communion offices—one the well-known form of the common Prayer-book, and the other the Scottish office, based mainly on King Charles's Prayer-book, and finally settled by the non-juring bishops in the first half of the eighteenth century. Except in so far as the Scottish office keeps up the communion of saints by a "remembrance of the faithful departed," there is practically not much difference between the two; although custom and prejudice have contrived to extract theological odium out of the respective merits of the Scottish and Anglican "uses." Gleig was the only presbyter in his diocese who used the Scottish office; and this fact might have been accepted as sufficient warranty for the absence of any prejudice on his part against it. Bishop Skinner broached the subject in what he evidently considered a very diplomatic letter, dwelling on his desire for "the preservation of what was

pure and primitive" in the Church, and laying down a declaration, which Dr Gleig was required to sign as a condition of the ratification of his election by the Episcopal College. Probably the Bishop thought that Dr Gleig would be afraid of running counter to the sympathies of his Anglican friends by a public declaration in favour of the Scottish office; but the Primus speedily found that, for once, he had met his match. Dr Gleig was quite ready to sign the declaration required "whether he was promoted to the Episcopal bench or not;" but he could not let slip the opportunity to read a severe lecture to his opponent. "I trust," he said, "that I shall be left at liberty to recommend the office by those means in my power which appear to my own judgment best adapted to the end intended. Controversy does not appear to me well adapted to this end, unless it be managed with great delicacy indeed. . . . Public controversy I will never directly employ, nor will I encourage it in others." Bishop Skinner accepted this implied rebuke, and Gleig was duly consecrated Bishop of Brechin. When he was installed in the see, he found evidence of his own election to the bishopric of Brechin many years before,—the news of which had been so sedulously concealed—in all probability by the Episcopal College—that he had never even heard a rumour of the event.

To trace the course of Bishop Gleig's Episcopate would be to write a history of the Episcopal Church of Scotland from 1811 to 1840. He entered the Episcopal College at a more advanced age, and with a more matured experience than Scottish bishops of that day were usually possessed of. He commanded the confidence of both the Scottish

and the Anglican parties in the Church, and successfully used his influence to adjust the balance and reconcile differences between the two. His broad mind showed him the way to surmount obstacles that had seemed insuperable to the narrower experience of the Northern bishops. He found the Church still suffering from the effects of its former position of discord with society and with law, and it was his strenuous effort to bring it into harmony with the best objects of both. It was mainly due to his efforts that the present firm alliance between the sister Churches was made and cemented, and that the rights of Scottish bishops obtained due recognition from the English metropolitans. His charges breathe a spirit that is at once catholic and broad; and while he is ever tolerant of individual convictions, he is extremely liberal in the permissive scope which he gives to his clergy. Wherever party spirit approaches him, he invariably seeks to meet it half-way, and to sacrifice his personal views so far as these may not be fettered by principle. Such a spirit speedily bore fruit in the councils of the Church. The great body of clergy were with him in his proposals for reform; even the Rev. John Skinner of Forfar, the son of the Primus, hastened to give Bishop Gleig his warm support, and strove to influence his father to co-operation. But though all the world was subdued, "the stubborn mind of Cato" remained unshaken. The old Primus thus testily writes in answer to his son's well-meaning counsel:—

"I must decline all further discussion of this subject unless it come from another quarter. You have a bishop of your own, . . . and you would need to be cautious in appealing to me, as able, in my official capacity, to

'bring the matter to an issue;' but you thereby confirm a jealousy, perhaps already excited, that *another* is, in fact, the *senior prelate*, and that I am only the late venerable Scottish Primus, Bishop Skinner!"

In fact, the Primus could not fail to see that the Bishop of Brechin had entirely overlapped his influence in the Church. He yielded so far, however, as to call a synod, in which Bishop Gleig succeeded in giving effect to his desire for uniformity, and in securing to the body of the clergy the right of making the laws of the Church, which the Episcopal College had so long denied them.

In his own see his efforts to improve the clerical standard were unremitting, especially to secure a reading and thinking clergy. Many of the oldest presbyters were apparently men of mediocre education and of narrow prejudices, and, as such, unable to hold their own when brought into rivalry with English Episcopalian priests. "Good men of decent manners and respectable talents" were the class that Bishop Gleig sought for ordination. One unfortunate incumbent, with whom the Bishop had a good deal of trouble, was a very bad reader, and Dr Gleig earnestly urged on him the propriety of taking lessons. "But from whom shall I take lessons, sir?" asked the presbyter. "From anybody, sir," was the Bishop's curt rejoinder. His advice to his clergy about reading the books which he had exerted himself to procure for the diocesan library was characterised by much liberality and sound sense. "I begin," he says, "with telling you that there is not one of the volumes which you will receive that does not contain something that is exceptionable, as well as much that is excellent; but every one of them

is calculated to compel the serious and attentive reader to think for himself; and it is such reading only as produces this effect that is really valuable. Clergymen who wish to improve their knowledge in divinity do not read one or two approved works with the view of committing their contents to memory, as a child commits to memory the contents of the Catechism. It is the business of those who are to be the teachers of others to prove all things, that they may hold fast that which they really know to be good, and not to adopt as good, and without examination, the opinions of a mere man, however eminent either for natural talents or acquired knowledge, for the Scriptures alone are entitled to implicit confidence."

Bishop Gleig's accession to the primacy on the Episcopal bench can scarcely be said to have strengthened his influence or raised his standing, for even before Primus Skinner's death his voice had been the ruling oracle in the Church's counsels. Bishop Skinner's death, however, removed from the Church the last shackles of provincialism, and in a great measure changed the position of Primus Gleig from a sedulous promoter of liberal reforms to a judicious guardian of the Church's conservative character, lest, the brake being removed, the coach might run too fast down hill. It was not unnatural that so strong-minded an administrator as Bishop Gleig should fall into the same mistake as he had combated against on the part of the last Primus—the assumption of a greater personal responsibility in the government of the Church than was strictly warranted by his theoretical position in the Scottish college as "*Primus inter pares*." His word, however, was so much law with his colleagues that

he was perfectly safe in anticipating their concurrence; and his policy was attended with this benefit to the Church, that during his primacy the conduct of Church affairs, especially the filling up of charges and dioceses, was managed apart from the influences of cliques and family parties, which had been so manifestly exercised in an earlier period. The long-standing jealousy between North and South was imperceptibly effaced under Bishop Gleig's prudent management; and he left the Church, which he had found full of local divisions and factions, a solid and harmonious body. The present generation knows the Episcopal Church of Scotland as a flourishing and influential body that has surmounted all the prejudices that were originally directed against its position, and that has attained an authority in Anglican Christendom far out of proportion to its revenues and numbers. If we come to closely trace the steps by which the Scottish Episcopal Church has attained this eminence, we shall find that most of them were taken under Bishop Gleig's guidance, and that a very large measure of its popularity and prosperity in the present day is the direct fruit of his prevision.

During Dr Gleig's primacy the King's visit to Scotland took place, and the interesting episode of the presentation of an address by the bishops occurred. The chief anxiety that troubled the College turned upon Bishop Jolly's wig. This "property" seems to have been an integral part of the College of Bishops; and though the Primus and his colleagues doubted its effect upon the emotions of royalty, they hesitated to suggest that it might be altered or dispensed with. In 1811 this wig had been described by a visitor to the Bishop as "in-

deed something remarkable. It was of a snow-white colour, and stood out behind his head in enormous curls of six or eight inches in depth." It was a favourite object of admiration to the boys of Fraserburgh, to whom, when he heard them commenting on his "terrible wig," the good Bishop replied, "I'm not a terrible Whig, boys, but a good old Tory." And so Bishop Jolly, wig and all, waited upon the King, who was much struck by his venerable appearance. An address composed by the Primus was presented to his Majesty; and the last link between the Church and its ancient allegiance was now severed by its personal homage to the house of Hanover.

With all his episcopal activity, Dr Gleig never laid aside his early literary tastes. His pen was never idle; and if it was not employed in the affairs of his diocese in charges, or in papers connected with the interests of the Church, it was at work for the publishers. An edition of 'Stackhouse's History of the Bible,' and a work on theology in a series of letters from a bishop to his son preparing for holy orders, are among the most considerable works which he produced during his later years. His strong literary predilections must have been greatly gratified by the mark which his son, now the ex-Chaplain-General, was making by his novels and historical works. In that son 'Maga' takes a pride in owning her oldest living contributor, the last of that goodly band, who, knit together by the common bond of talent and Toryism, twined green laurels around her still young brows. Mr Gleig had left the army, after seeing a good deal of active service, and taken orders in the Church, much to his father's satisfaction. His story of the 'Subaltern' appeared in 'Black-

wood' as early as 1824-25, and showed all the signs of that literary talent to which the readers of 'Maga' have been so frequently indebted for over half a century. The old Bishop was much aided by his son's assistance in Church affairs during the last years of his life; and he would have had a difficulty in finding a more judicious adviser.

Bishop Gleig continued to live at Stirling all his life, and never resided within his own diocese—a custom which, strange to say, was the general practice of the Scottish bishops down to the middle of the present century. "His house," says his son, "was a very comfortable, unpretending edifice, on the outskirts of the town, and commanded from the windows in the rear one of the most beautiful views in Scotland—the valley of the Forth, with the ruins of Cambuskenneth Abbey, and the Ochils, Lomond, and Touch hills bounding it on every side. Here he lived a simple, earnest, useful life, respected by his Church, by society, and by the people who came in contact with him. Here also he dispensed with a free hand a modest and simple hospitality, in which all who obtained access to it were delighted to participate, for his conversational powers were not inferior to his literary abilities; and as a teller of stories, of which he seemed to possess no end, he had few equals." A good many of those which Dean Ramsay collected and published he learned from Bishop Gleig; and many more well deserved to be had in remembrance. Unfortunately, however, these things, if not noted down when fresh, soon pass out of men's memories; but one which thoroughly upset the gravity of an archiepiscopal dinner-table we happen to recollect.

The Bishop visited London in the spring of 1811, and dined,

among other places, at Lambeth Palace with Archbishop Manners Sutton. The company and conversation were alike decorous, till the subject of dilapidations was broached, and the liability of the English clergy to build and keep in repair their parsonages, and of rectors to deal in like manner with the chancels of their churches, was dealt upon. One of the party, an English dignitary, had travelled in Scotland the previous summer, and was eloquent on the good old Scottish custom which devolves these burdens upon the heritors. He referred especially to a particular parish, of which we have forgotten the name, but in which, not the manse only, but the church also, had been entirely rebuilt at the expense of the laird. "Oh," observed Bishop Gleig, "I know that parish well, and I will tell you how it comes to be so well provided with both kirk and manse. When I was a lad, the laird, who happened to be Lord Advocate at the time, was likewise the patron. He took little interest in either kirk or manse till the old minister fell sick and died, when, within an hour of the event, his servant, whose name was Hugh, opened the library door and told him that the schoolmaster requested an audience. The schoolmaster, a 'sticket stibbler,' as most Scottish parish schoolmasters were in those days, had the reputation of being more of a wag than a scholar; and the Lord Advocate, himself a humorist, desired the dominie to be shown up. The dominie entered the great man's room, whom he found sitting at a writing-table with papers and books before him. 'Well, Mr M'Gowan, what is your business with me?' 'My lord, I just called to ask your lordship wad gie me the kirk.' 'You, Mr M'Gowan! why, they tell

me you are but a poor scholar. Can you read Latin?' 'O ay, my lord, just as well as your lordship can read Hebrew.' 'Let's see,' replied the Lord Advocate, opening at the same time a Latin grammar which happened to be beside him; 'read these two lines and give me the English for them.' The lines ran thus:—

'En, ecce, hic, primum quantum quintumve requirunt,—
Heu petit et quintum, velut O, hei
væque dativum.'

The dominie glanced them through, and without a moment's hesitation gave this rendering: 'En, ecce, hic, primum,'—'You see, my lord, I'm the first;,' 'quantum quintumve requirunt,'—'there will be four or five seeking it;,' 'heu petit et quintum,'—'Hugh asks 500 marks for his good word;,' 'velut O,'—'like a cipher as he is;,' 'hei væque dativum,'—'but wae worth me if I gie it to him.' The Lord Advocate was so tickled with the schoolmaster's ready wit, that he not only gave him the living, but rebuilt both manse and kirk."

Sunday with the Bishop was always a feast-day. He made a point of having four or five members of his congregation—poor, but gentle, to dine with him on that day. A half-pay lieutenant; a reduced militia officer, who eked out his small means by giving lessons in French; a couple of maiden ladies who made a scanty living by selling tea; and others of the same grade. Before these he would pour out his stores of humour and general talk as freely as when Dr Parr and Mr Ricardo, the political economist, were his guests. He took great delight, also, in seeing young people happy; nor can we doubt that many, now grey-headed men and women, still look back

with pleasure on the little unpretending dances in which they took part under his roof, while the venerable man sat and smiled upon them for an hour before retiring to his study, and leaving them to the care of his faithful housekeeper and step-daughter, Miss Fulton. In the account which his son gives of his last days we have beautifully portrayed the closing scene of a well-spent life, ripe with years and honours; and a simple yet dignified dissolution as fitly closes the career of a Christian bishop.

“The reverence which the people paid to the old man was very touching. A large stone was placed on the foot-path of the road which leads from the old Stirling Bridge to the village of Causeyhead. It was about half a mile, or perhaps a little more, from his house. He used to rest upon it before returning. It was called the Bishop’s Stone; and if it be still in existence, it retains, I have no doubt, the same name. By-and-by strength failed him even for this, and for a year or so his only movement was from his bedroom to his study—the one adjoining the other. Darkness set in upon him rapidly after this; and it is sad to look back upon, that though he knew

me at first on my arrival, he soon began to talk to me about myself as if I had been a stranger, and often with the humour which seemed never to leave him to the last. Even then, however, the spirit of devotion never left him. Often on going into his room I found him on his knees, and as he was very deaf, I was obliged to touch him on the shoulder before he could be made aware that any one was near him. On such occasions the look which he turned upon me was invariably that of one lifted above the things of the earth. I shall never forget the expression—it was so holy, and yet so bright and cheerful. I was not with him when he died. The last attack of illness did its work very speedily; but Miss Fulton told me that he slept his life away as quietly as an infant sleeps.”

It is characteristic of the unobtrusive work of the Scottish Episcopal Church, that lives like those of Gleig and Jolly—lives which are capable of imparting a deep lesson to a world that is not overburdened with earnestness and sincerity—should for the most part be hid within its own annals. Lives so simple and unpretentious, so full of lofty feeling and humble ambitions, have found a congenial chronicler in Mr Walker.

CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE.

IV. NOVELISTS.

As knowledge is increased, books are multiplied, but nothing in the way of books has been multiplied so fast as the Novel. In most branches of literature, the author is presumed to have had certain advantages of literary training. He has gone in for some kind of special self-culture : he has given thought and attention to a particular subject—probably before venturing upon a regular work, he has tried his pinions in preliminary flights. The only ordinary exceptions are in the cases of travellers and explorers, and with these the intrinsic interest of the matter may supply deficiencies of literary skill. But the novel-writer seems to be on a different footing altogether, and to belong by right of his vocation to an exceptional order of genius. Like the poet, he is born, not made. And when we say “he,” of course we merely make conventional use of the masculine pronoun ; for in reality, in the miscellaneous hosts of the novel-writers, the fair sex very largely predominates. There are many reasons why ladies should be more addicted to novel-writing than men. In the first place, they have far more leisure and fewer ways of disposing of it to their satisfaction. When the husband is hard at work, the wife may be occupied with those cares of the household which engross her thoughts, to the exclusion of lighter subjects, even when she is not actually bustling about her business. But then, on the other hand, she may have an easy income, plenty of servants, and no children, and be sorely put to it to kill the time. Or she may have a praiseworthy wish to take

her share of the family labour, and turn to some profitable account such talents as Providence has bestowed on her. While young ladies who have no particular responsibilities, who have no need to toil, and who think of the sewing-machine as little as of the spinning-wheel that was the resource of their respectable great-grandmothers, have few of those outlets for their energies which fall to their more fortunate brothers. They can’t well carry a gun ; and they have neither nerve nor inclination for the hunting-field, even supposing there are horses in the stables, and that their lines have fallen in a hunting county. They cannot be off to Norway at a moment’s notice, or go climbing unprotected in the High Alps, or make pilgrimages to the temples of the Nile, or the holy places in Palestine. They have not even the resources of the club, with its gossip, and scandal, and glasses of sherry. The rubber, which gives occupation to the memory and intellectual powers, and may realise a modest competency to a quick and thoughtful practitioner, has never, somehow, been much of a feminine pursuit, save with dowagers given to revoking or sharp practice. Croquet in the long-run gets to be a weariness of the soul ; dances, picnics, and lawn-tennis are the ephemeral enjoyments of their seasons. *Ennui* asserts its sway, and existence threatens to become insupportable. There is the grand alternative of matrimony, of course ; but marriages are matters in which two must be concerned ; and the lady may be fastidious, or possibly unattractive. In these cases one of

two things happens. Either she is naturally unintellectual or indolent, and abandons herself to the lot of looking out, like Sister Anne, for the husband who may come to the rescue; or what seems to happen at least as frequently nowadays, she decides upon novel-writing by way of distraction.

That notion does not so readily occur to a man. He is a grosser and more practically-minded being, setting altogether aside the openings for his superfluous activity. If there be romance in his composition, it is apt to lie latent; and he is rather ashamed of it than otherwise. Should his thoughts be lightly turning to love, he proceeds forthwith to translate them into action, opening a safety-valve for his sentiment in the shape of a violent flirtation. He is too egotistical to be highly imaginative, or to be able to throw himself into the places of other people and confound his distinctive individuality in theirs. In fact, the youth who betakes himself to poetry or novel-writing, is likely to have a strong dash of the feminine in him. He wears his hair long, taking exquisite care of it in its studied disorder; he is in the habit of eschewing the shooting-coat for the frock-coat: and in that it must be confessed that he shows his appreciation of the suitable and of the essential elements of the art of dress. For he shrinks with womanly sensitiveness from the rougher masculine nature; he is scared by the stories which enliven the smoking-room, and which bring a blush to the sallow pallor of his cheek though there may really be no great harm in them. He is afraid of damp feet, and of being scratched by the brambles in the covers; while, as for flying an ox-fence or swishing through a bullfinch, the bare notion of such a break-neck piece of auda-

city sends his heart shrinking into his boots. Yet he makes himself a nuisance in drawing-rooms at unseasonable hours, where he gives himself effeminate airs of intellectual superiority; so it is a god-send to all parties concerned when the dreams of a literary vocation dawn upon him, and he secludes himself to scribble in his private apartment. It is true that his retreat may be but the beginning of his troubles. For, knowing nothing more of him than those obvious characteristics we have described, we are ready to lay any odds in reason that his maiden efforts will be returned on his hands. The public is not likely to suffer in any case; for even if he pay for the honours of publication, people are not bound to read him. But it may be hoped, for his own sake, that he will reconsider his ways, and settle into as useful a member of society as the constitution of his mind and body will permit.

With his sister or cousin it is very different. Unless she be a phenomenally prosaic young female, from her babyhood she has been living in ideal worlds and peopling them with all kinds of happy fancies. She was acting fiction in embryo when she first played with her doll, and lavished her maternal tenderness over the damage she had done to its features. And since she played the severe but affectionate mother she has been imagining herself the loving and self-sacrificing wife. Many a youth has been made the imaginary hero of a domestic existence of which he never dreamed; even middle-aged warriors and politicians of commanding reputation and distinguished manners have been idealised and worshipped with an admiring devotion; for young girls feel a strange attraction to their seniors of the other sex. Possibly if she

has been brought up under the maternal wing, or has passed from the nursery into the care of unsympathetic governesses, those instinctive tendencies may have been kept in check. But in the congenial atmosphere of the young ladies' school, they blossom and bloom into tropical luxuriance. What loving and longing hearts have been indissolubly linked together, on the common ground of mutual *épanchement* and confidences! What lasting friendships have been formed for consolation in the chilling atmosphere of an unkindly world! These friendships may have already begun to be loosened, as the fair *pensionnaires* budded towards womanhood, and began to draw admiring glances; and envy, jealousy, and many an unchristian passion may have forced their way into that once hallowed Eden. But on the other hand, the education of the passions advanced with experience, as they lavished their treasures on more natural objects. And there may have been plucking of forbidden fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The studies of the young sentimentalists were by no means confined to such books as would be recommended by a modern Mrs Chapone. There was many a novel read on the sly, that was all the more delightful for the sin and the secrecy; at all events the family tables at home were heaped with the latest volumes from Mudie. We can easily picture the particular books that helped to form the "mind" of the future author. One and all might have taken for their motto, "Love shall still be lord of all." Those that taught the sordid maxims of worldly wisdom, and preached the solid advantages of suitable connections and settlements, were still at a discount in these unsophisticated days. The diamonds and the

carriages were to come in due time, but rather as the gifts of the good fairies, or as the rewards of a relenting destiny, towards the end of the third volume. There was pretty sure to be a period of sore probation first, when the course of affection ran turbid and troubled; when unnatural parents threw unexampled obstacles in the way of the union of clinging hearts; when the heroine would struggle out of the depths of despair to soar to sublime heights of self-sacrifice. And a very pretty training it was, if not for the chronicles of actual lives, at all events for perpetuating the literature of a school.

Of course the newly-emancipated school-girl has not the faintest idea of turning to authorship, further, at least, than in some occasional sonnet, when the thought, though it be mawkish in the extreme, is decidedly sweeter than the metre. In the meantime, in a variety of agreeable distractions, she is progressing unconsciously with her preparatory studies. In such society as is brought within her reach, at dances and dinners and other vanities, she acquires all the practical knowledge of life that is to leaven a mass of crude unrealities. When she is not playing some quiet little game herself—trifling over a passing flirtation, giving shy encouragement to aspirants, or holding unwelcome admirers at arm's-length,—she is looking on and marking the game of others. Should her mind be brighter and more attractive than her person—should it be her fate to be shelved as a wall-flower in the ball-room, and be left out of the nicest sets at lawn-tennis—we may be sure that her eyes will be all the sharper. Where there is no genuine talent for literary work, it is the confirmed spinster of a certain age who is likely to be most fairly successful. And perhaps household

anxieties may be blessings to her in disguise, enabling her to extend the range and depth of her observations. In the place of those social frivolities and flirtations, which she might have studied almost as usefully as her favourite books, she learns something of poverty and its practical effects. She can describe from the very life how a careful "house-mother" may manage to grapple with narrow means; how a care-worn face may wear a smile in the most trying circumstances, showing a heroism that is all the greater because it is entirely unpretending and unconscious. She may remark the influences of troubles upon different natures; and if she has the sentiment either of humour or of pathos, she will find materials enough for the display of one and the other. Though she has seen scarcely anything of the greater world that lies beyond the tiny garden-plot of a semi-detached villa, yet she may have assisted at scenes of distress and suffering, brought comfort to the pillow of the sick, and sat by the deathbeds of the dying.

With all that, however, and at the very best, the range of her actual knowledge must necessarily be extremely limited; and it is there that she must be at an inevitable disadvantage with the man whose talents are in no respect superior to her own. We are not talking, of course, of those women of extraordinary genius, who should be even more highly placed than they are, were we to remember that with them intuitive perceptions seem to have superseded the necessity for ordinary knowledge. She has not gone wandering in male costume like a George Sand, through the back streets of a great capital, risking herself in hazardous adventures—partly from the love of them, partly from a perilous en-

thusiasm for her art. She has not even enjoyed the æsthetical advantage of coming in contact with those odd and disreputable members of society whom every man must mix with more or less. She has not fagged or fought at some public school; she has not outrun the constable at college, making the acquaintance of dons and duns and usurers; nor has she had the picturesque training of the mess and the ante-room, knocking around the world in British garrisons, anywhere between St Helena and the Himalayas. Yet she cannot altogether confine herself to a gynecæia in her books; nor can she keep her readers entirely in the company of parsons, prudes, and the unimpeachably respectable. But if she goes far beyond, she must create her pictures for the most part in the dimness of her inner consciousness; or if she should be better informed than we are willing to believe, her delicacy binds her to a double measure of reserve, unless, indeed, she have the shameless assurance to unsex herself. Still the most pure-minded and innocently ignorant of women must provide her readers with excitement in some shape. Suicides, mysterious disappearances, and murders, are permissible business enough—and, of course, we have a fair sprinkling of these; but then they have been done and overdone *ad nauseam*, by the professed mistresses of the knack. So the novice can hardly help falling back on mental agonies, and "worms i' the bud," and the philosophy of the passions in their most tempestuous moods. For these, as we may well trust, she has to draw exclusively on her imagination. Even for the fashionable matron, writing in her Belgravian boudoir, it is not easy to strike effects out of the storms in the saucer, which are the most she personally knows

anything about ; and after she has tried her best to magnify them, they are more akin to the extravagant than the sublime. In virtue of her matronly position she may drag us into the divorce courts, although these have ceased to awaken our jaded interest except when some ingeniously licentious Frenchman undertakes to get up the cases. But the girl, or the prudish elderly maiden, should dispense with even such threadbare materials as these ; and with the best intentions, and a respectable style, she can hardly escape being insipid or ridiculous. And we concede her a very great deal when we concede a respectable style. For, as a rule, it would appear that English composition can be no part of the higher feminine education. We might be grateful for the delightful confusion of metaphors that often force a smile with their wild incongruities ; for the neat misapplication of epithets having their origin in the unknown classical tongues ; for the introduction of hackneyed scraps from the French, wrought in, if we may borrow one of them, *à tort et à travers*. But it is less easy to tolerate the invertebrate sentences which are wanting so often either in the head or the tail : for the blunders in spelling, the confusion in grammar, and the gross solecisms in the commonest English. These last, indeed, are painfully significant of the rapid progress of the mania for novel-writing, which must long ago have made its way even below the middle strata of the middle classes. At least it would be difficult otherwise to account for the repulsive coarseness of style, and the grosser vulgarity of thought, which would shock any woman with the slightest pretensions to refinement, though they are quite what we should expect of a respectable lady's-maid.

What is an excusable fault in an inexperienced woman—her real offence being her writing at all—becomes in a man a positive crime, only to be extenuated by his youth and his verdancy. He is not reduced to choose between crossing his hands or taking a place as a lady-help, or as a governess to fractious children, or as companion to some cross-grained old harridan who shares her affections between herself and her money. He has plenty of honest occupations open to him. He may fall back on the pulpit if he has no talent for the bar, and cut a very respectable figure as a curate : he can always try his luck in the colonies, or offer for a keeper's place, or practise his penmanship as a clerk in the city. At the worst he can fall back upon stone-breaking or oakum-picking. What reason in the world has he, we indignantly demand, to imagine that he has the makings in him of a Bulwer or a Thackeray ? We admit there is a good deal in the old saying, that if a man tries for a silken gown he may hope to snatch a sleeve of it. But we altogether dispute the right of any man to scramble for what is hopelessly above his reach, when he proposes to make use of the public as his stepping-stones. He ought to learn something of himself before he professes to entertain other people ; and as we have remarked already, the primary purpose of the novel is amusement most charily blended with instruction. We hold fast to that sound doctrine. We are less gratified than provoked even by the most brilliant originality, when it puts a strain on our faculties in place of relaxing them. And what shall we say, then, of the self-confident novice who insists on trying "his prentice hand" at subtle psychological analysis, or who undertakes to instruct us in the silliest platitudes ? Only that,

upon the whole, we like him better, —at all events we dislike him rather less,—than his brother, who falls into the fashion of the ladies, and without the excuse of their sentimental illusions, discourses of the love of which he knows nothing. It is not “sweet Anne Page,” but “a great lubberly boy,” who goes blundering about with his clumsy imagination on the ground which is closed to him like Paradise to the Peri. What he may come to be we know not. He may school himself into the art of gracefully languishing like a Petrarch, and learn to sigh his soul out in moving serenades beneath the balcony of his mistress. He may become a worthy fellow, with earnest passions, who lays siege in the intervals of his business to some heart that is worth the winning; who will marry, and make satisfactory settlements, and become a highly respectable husband and father. In the meantime, with his shallow inexperience and self-conceit, he makes himself a most intolerable nuisance. The only thing he succeeds in is in painting his own portrait; and that, as we need hardly say, he does with engaging unconscientiousness. In each of his chapters we recognise him as he is, overdressed or slovenly dressed as it may happen, but in either case most embarrassed in feminine society. When he heaves his sighs, they are visibly pumped up; and when he makes a contorted effort to be pathetic, he loses himself in unintelligible bathos. It is not worth while breaking butterflies on the wheel, or we might carry our remarks on him into more detail. If he be of humble connections, and hopes to get a living by his pen, the sharp disillusioning may come to him before much harm is done, and he may turn to some respectable trade, or to travelling the coun-

try as a bagman. The worst that can usually happen to anybody who reads him, is to break down at the beginning of one of his stories. But sometimes—and we fancy that some glaring examples will suggest themselves—he becomes our special aversion for a couple of seasons or so. Not that we do not personally shun him and all his works, but because as it wearied the Athenians to hear Aristides called “the good,” so it disgusts us with infinitely more reason to see him advertised and puffed. He swaggers into the novel market on the strength of a well-sounding title. He may call himself a foreign prince, or be a genuine scion of native nobility. He is happy in a publisher who hopes much from his quality, and cares comparatively little for the quality of his work. The name in itself should be a sufficient guarantee for the intimacy of the illustrious author with the great world he was born in. The oracle is worked industriously. The courtly journals stand by their order, and are lavish of praise more or less fulsome. Now and then a well-arranged dinner-party may win over a critic of a better class. There may be something really to be said for the author by a dexterous advocate. He may be an unblushing plagiarist, with an ingenuity that defies detection, if it does not elude it; and there are scenes and passages in his books that may be quoted with discriminating approval. If we are to believe the inscriptions on his title-pages, he passes quickly into a second or a third edition; and indeed we see little reason to doubt them, for his name acquires a certain market value, and he is encouraged to publish again and again.

We need hardly say that if our remarks on beginners in the novel business seem to be severe, we mean

the application of them to be confined to those who have palpably mistaken their vocation. Many a man may honestly try and honourably fail; and the capable critic will be lenient to conscientious and intelligent work, even though it appear, as Artemus Ward observed of Shakespeare, when imagining him a correspondent of the New York dailies, that the writer "lacks the rakesit fancy and imagination."

In our opinion, we should say that if the young novel-writer were wise, he would rely, in the first instance, almost entirely on his own knowledge of life. It need not and cannot be extensive; but it is trustworthy so far as it goes. Frank autobiography can hardly fail to be interesting, however uneventful in its incidents. We have pointed out already that the male sex has "a pull" in that respect. The aspiring novelist must have fair powers of observation; but a very moderate exercise of them should have provided him with some slender *répertoire* of characters. He must blend a proportion of sentiment with his action; but for that, again, he may, in great measure, have recourse to himself. If he have the courage to be candid; if he have any habit of self-examination, and the patience to probe his own nature, and to plumb the depths of his feelings, he may easily succeed without any compromising indiscretions in making his hero natural enough for any ordinary purpose. His women he will find more embarrassing, and in them he is almost certain to break down. That, however, need in no way dishearten him; for a perfect novel is absolutely phenomenal, and even Sir Walter Scott, in the flush of his fame, made lay figures of the Misses Bradwardine and Mannering. If he stick to his sisters he may avoid caricature; or

if he has been precocious in his affections like the author of 'Don Juan,' make excellent use of flirtations of his own. As for his other men, he can hardly be at any great loss, if he cast about among his familiar cronies and his college companions. It should be easy to blacken one or two into rascals, or whiten them into saints, while keeping the rest as respectable mediocrities; though, on the whole, unless his genius be unmistakably of the lurid order, he will do well to avoid exaggeration in the beginning. So far as our observation goes, the secret of a first success lies in limiting the number of the characters, simplifying the plot, and laying the scenes of it as nearly as possible in the present year, or, at all events, in the present decade. Simplification assists you in dispensing with the skill which can only come from practice or intuitive talent. And nineteen readers in twenty are far more interested in the frailties of their next-door neighbours than in ingenious historical romance, or the most brilliantly fanciful pictures from the antipodes.

We have remarked elsewhere that many clever writers have never surpassed their maiden novels; and on the principles we have ventured to lay down, that seems to stand to reason. On first taking pen in hand, nine men in ten are cramped by timidity. They have the terror of the critics before their eyes; unconsciously they criticise themselves, and are apt to reject what is excellent. If their imaginations are really free and fertile, they are troubled over the embarrassment of choice between the clashing ideas that jostle on them. There the veteran has the advantage of quick decision. He knows that what he may reject for the moment will come in usefully later; and at all events, that he will lose more in

élan than he is likely to gain by painstaking selection. But then the *débutant*, on the other hand, has the amplest elbow-room. Whatever he may choose to say or do, he cannot possibly be borrowing from himself; and if he only write naturally when he has once decided on his lines, he can hardly, at all events, be lacking in freshness. His first book may prove little more than that he will do well to try again, and may perhaps turn into a novel-writer. Nor need he be discouraged if his second attempt be comparatively unsuccessful. It can hardly have the freshness of his first, and must necessarily be a more crucial test of his abilities. He has to call more on his imagination to help out realism, and must begin to exercise himself in the artifices that are become a habit with the veteran. He wants the easy confidence that goes for so much; and may be over-regardful of the strictures that have been passed upon him. We are very far from asserting that the novice may not get valuable hints from his critics; but he will never achieve anything considerable if, in the last resort, he do not refer everything to his private judgment, and only endeavour to profit by the advice he sees reason to assent to. We remember a story in one of the books of our childhood, where an old man, driving a donkey over a bridge, brings the beast by which he gets his living to a miserable end, by listening to the conflicting advice of the passengers. So it may well be with the novice bewildered among the critics. More than once we have taken the pains to select conflicting extracts from various reviews, all ostensibly of nearly equal authority, arranging them antagonistically in parallel columns, and we may safely say, that we have seldom read anything at once more confusing and more entertain-

ing. We can recall more than one of the most popular novel-writers of our day—men who seem to go to work with the method of machinery, and who may be confidently counted upon for three or four books in the year—who either began with a dash and then comparatively broke down, or who wrought themselves up, by slow and fluctuating degrees, to the fame and the comfortable incomes they are enjoying. Many of their worst novels have still a circulation in yellow covers, partly because a well-established name will sell anything, and partly because the authors, having the root of the matter in them, showed something of their cleverness even in their faults. But under a series of disappointments and mortifications, they might easily have ceased to persevere, and both they and the public that makes the fortunes of its favourites would have equally had cause to regret the decision.

Next to the indispensable imagination and literary talent, the most helpful qualities are versatility and tact. There are men whose names will occur to everybody, who have lost reputation prematurely, because they are fast fixed in a groove. Their books had once an amazing circulation, commanded high prices, and were scattered broadcast in a succession of cheap editions. They were rapaciously pirated in the United States, and translated into most of the languages of the Continent. Proprietors of pushing magazines thought it worth while to treat with them, even on the terms of losing money on each particular bargain. In some respects they may be said to have been English Gaboriaus. Working backwards, as we may presume from their carefully planned *dénouements*, they put together most cleverly intricate puzzles, like those ingenious complications of ivory-carving which

are turned out by the patient Chinese. Pulling them to pieces when once you had the clue, you fancied you could detect the trick of their construction, although you could not help admiring its cleverness. But these feats of art and skill are not to be multiplied indefinitely; and yet, though each subsequent repetition of them has been falling flatter and flatter, it never appears to occur to the authors that it would be well were they to change their vein. Like the angler who keeps casting his fly in the pool where he has been excited by killing a good-sized fish, they return time after time to their *première amours*, though the public have ceased to rise, and each fresh cast is a fresh disappointment. Even Gaboriau, who was a master in his particular craft, was often hard put to it latterly. At the best of times—in his ‘Crime d’Orcival’ and ‘L’affaire Lerouge’—he had to spin out his volumes to the indispensable length, by dragging you through long episodic digressions; while, subsequently, he wandered away more and more from his criminal courts and the Rue Jerusalem and its detectives, into the commonplace world of dissipated Paris.

Talking of mannerism of plot naturally leads on to mannerism of style. Almost every man has his tricks of writing, which are apt to grow upon him unconsciously. Sometimes they are so insignificant as to be almost unobjectionable; and yet they jar on the ear of the sensitive reader. As almost everybody must plead guilty, more or less, we have the less hesitation in alluding to these, even at the risk of laying ourselves open to retort. They may be merely the unnecessary repetition of some conjunction which seems to lift the writer more comfortably across the rift which

yawns between a couple of his periods. What strikes one more, of course, is the reiteration of some epithet or qualifying adverb, which will invariably force itself to the front when the pen hesitates and pauses. For the use of words of the kind becomes wellnigh mechanical; actually they may serve their purpose at least as well as any other: and yet, we believe that the most careless of readers come to recognise them with a sense of irritation. What is more strange, is the affection which writers who should be excellent judges of style, and who have had an infinite variety of literary practice, take for certain phrases and turns of speech which, to say the least of them, are singularly ungraceful. It would be in vain for these eminent gentlemen to make any attempt at concealing their identity; and we would undertake to draw up from memory a catalogue of words and phrases which should reveal the workmanship of any one of them—unless, indeed, they had been put on their guard, and had cut their work to pieces in the revising. For it is wonderful how some favourite phrase comes to fall naturally into its place in a sentence: if you stop to change it, you check the flow of thought, and are, after all, but indifferently satisfied with its substitute. Should any one care for illustrations upon the abuse of mannerism, we cannot do better than refer him to Thackeray’s ‘Novels by Eminent Hands,’ or to some of the parodies and extravaganzas by the American humorists, though these are wanting in Thackeray’s more delicate discrimination.

Mere crotchets in expression are comparative trifles, and injure the writer more than anybody else. What is infinitely more offensive are those stock-epithets which habitually do duty in the eloquent

descriptions of the brilliant melodramatics of the sensational school. These writers are for the most part feminine, and their pens go dashing along with true feminine volubility. How well we know what we have to look for; and how easy it seems to be to catch the knack of the style! We have the weird beauty of waning moonlight; the sinister glare of glittering eyes; the lustrous effulgence of tawny locks; the firm, square-set jaws, eloquent of indomitable resolutions; the sunny smiles; the long shapely hands; the fairy feet; the fiendish scowls;—and all the rest of it, *ad nauseam*. Would that such “high falutin’” were confined to the language, but we shall have something to say by-and-by of the matter, of the sensational novel. In the meantime we may advert for a moment to the mannerism of picturesque description. We need hardly say that it is a fault, if fault it be, of a very different kind. But as there are artists who stick from first to last to storms breaking over Highland hills, to Sussex harvest-fields and Surrey woodlands; so there are authors who will repaint the identical scenery till, grand or beautiful as it is, we begin to be wearied. We are reminded of Mr Pecksniff’s elevations of Salisbury Cathedral, taken from every point of the compass. We are thinking at the moment of Mr William Black; and we have the less hesitation in mentioning him, as we should suppose that few men have less need to be monotonous. His ‘Adventures of a Phaeton’ embraced an infinite variety of English landscapes; and the Downs near Leatherhead, and the lanes around Dorking, were touched to the full as lightly and gracefully as the caves of Staffa or the whirlpool of Corryvreckan. But Mr Black will go back to the hills of Skye and the Sound of Mull

as regularly as the sportsmen who have rented their shootings there. The spirit of the Hebridean minstrel inspires his pen, and his feelings find appropriate expression in the delicate beauty and richness of his imagery. But the very beauty appears to argue a barrenness which we cannot readily believe in; so we resent having ‘The Princess of Thule’ repeat herself in ‘Macleod of Dare.’ Those who are the warmest admirers of Mr Black, must have had almost enough of “the misty hills of Skye;” of Colonsay in tempest, and Jura in gloom, and Coll and Eigg and Tiree in all the tints of the rainbow.

Next to novels of a manner come the novels with a purpose; and the novelist who writes with a purpose must always be in some degree self-sacrificing. At best he is more or less tied down to preaching or pamphleteering; and though genius may gild the pill, there is a sense of effort in swallowing it. When an earnest man takes to teaching through novels, he must almost inevitably go to extremes, which are injurious to the principles of his art. He over-colours or distorts his characters, deepens his contrasts of light and shade; nay, he will sometimes be tempted to embody a disquisition in his story that he may force it down the throats of his reluctant readers. Dickens did some public good in that way, nor, perhaps, did his reputation suffer much by his philanthropy; but it is not every novelist who is a Dickens. His satirical side-hits in the ‘Pickwick Papers’ come in admirably; but the ‘Pickwick Papers’ were merely linked together by the loosest of plots. The workhouse system and the police courts in ‘Oliver Twist’—Doctors’ Commons in ‘David Copperfield’—the Court of Chancery and the detectives in ‘Bleak House’—stage plagiarisms in ‘Nicholas

Nickleby'—the Circumlocution Office in 'Little Dorrit,'—were decidedly drags on these stories. Dotheboys Hall and Mr Wackford Squeers were exceptions that proved the general rule. It is another thing when satire in fiction takes a wider range, and embraces the humorous eccentricities of a nation, or even of some great section of society. Whether the strictures on American institutions in 'Martin Chuzzlewit' were fair or not, they fell in with the scheme of the book—they brought out in relief the traits of the characters; and the author so thoroughly succeeded in his aim, that everybody laughed, and laughed heartily. Thus no living writer has used the novelist's art and gifts with more practical purpose than Mr Charles Reade. He has shown up trades-unions, and prisons, and private madhouses, and more things of the kind than we can well remember. We have always thought his 'Never too Late to Mend' one of the most spirited and touching stories that has appeared in our own times; though for imaginative power and perfection of literary workmanship, we prefer the 'Cloister on the Hearth.' But even those who admire Mr Reade as we do must admit that the horrors and portraits in 'Never too Late to Mend' were more sensational than realistic. And whether the cold-blooded atrocity of the Jacks-in-office be admissible or founded upon facts, it is certain that the tortures inflicted on the prisoners betray us into a sentimental sympathy with crime, and a dangerous oblivion of criminal antecedents. We believe that few counsel get up their cases more carefully than Mr Reade; but if men of undeniable genius handicap themselves heavily in promoting social reforms through the medium of brilliant romance, the

audacity of their duller imitators must incur its inevitable penalty. How well we know the impulsive Church controversialists, who undertake the propagation of their peculiar tenets—who preach up or cry down ritualistic observances—who introduce their model parsons and their amiable ladies bountiful, that circulate through the cottages with tea and tracts, and are always saying words in season or out of season. The absurdity of such stories from the practical point of view is that, in their prolixity and shallow sectarianism, they defeat their own ends, and are only read by the people who are already converted to their principles. Those who differ shrink from them as Satan from holy water; while it needs neither their prejudices nor their bigotry to make them intolerably dull to anybody who reads with the idea of being amused. Almost more detestable is the political monomaniac who fancies himself a rising Disraeli; and the occasional *jeu d'esprit* of some better man, who has thrown it off in the vigour of his political enthusiasm, is giving those ponderous triflers perpetual encouragement.

On the whole, if we were driven to choose and to read, we should decidedly prefer the modern sensational school. There at least you have brightness, and, occasionally, fun; and at one time it could boast a certain originality. It was rather a happy thought, and literally produced an agreeably shuddering "sensation" when it was suggested that in the sylph-like form of a shrinking maiden or a blushing bride, there might lurk the passions and the callous cruelty of a Brinvilliers. We had half forgotten the *Acqua Toffana*, as the chemists have lost the secret of it; and here was something as deadly being infused into claret-glasses

or handed round in teacups by respectable footmen. Eyes that beamed upon you with angelic softness the one moment, were shooting glances of concentrated venom the next, or gazing in seething malignancy with the stony stare of the basilisk. Murder stalked with stealthy tread up the back staircases of the most highly-rented houses; bravoos, disguised in powdered hair and gorgeous liveries, draw their chairs sociably to the tables in servants' halls; mothers made away with their children as if they were ordering the execution of a litter of puppies. Had all that been bluntly told, it would have sounded unnatural and extravagant in a police report. But writers like Miss Braddon had undoubtedly the talent of mixing it up with the realistic, so as to throw an air of possibility over the whole. You might have been slow to give Lady Audley credit for the vice which belied her beautiful face; but any scene appeared dramatically conceivable, when you had been made so thoroughly at home in the surroundings. It was your own fault if you did not feel like one of the family in the mansion in Park Lane, or the banker's villa at Twickenham. You had been impressed by the chaste colours of the walls, and admired the rich texture of the tapestries. You might make a shrewd guess at the price of the table-cover, and you were familiar with the quaint patterns on the breakfast china. You know the rare exotics on the lawn rather better than the gardener; and had revelled in all the effects of sunlight and moonshine, to which that hard-headed Scotchman was serenely indifferent.

But as bold conceptions of this sort began with a climax, it was difficult, or rather impossible, to cap them. No doubt there were

creditable efforts of audacity in a milder if not a less improbable shape. As when Mrs Henry Wood, in her 'East Lynn,' brought back an erring wife to the roof-tree of her injured husband, and made her tend their cherished children as governess, avoiding recognition behind a pair of spectacles. Such brilliant fancies, however, could not come every day to everybody; and accordingly, both the originators of the sensational "dodge," and their indefatigable imitators, were hard put to it to keep up the excitement. After making their heroines wade through gore in their swan's-down slippers, they took to refining upon breaches of the moral law, and more especially of the seventh commandment. There, however, our Englishwomen are at a sad disadvantage, and greatly to be pitied they are. They must deny themselves the unfettered licence of the French romance; and even when they dare to borrow some refinement of depravity, they must tone it down to the English taste. With the most praiseworthy ambition, if they are to sell their books, or obtain admission for their stories into decent magazines, they can hardly write up to the disclosures of the divorce trials. The natural alternative is to launch out in the luxurious, to elaborate marvellous types of hopelessly demoralised sensuality, and to shadow out dim possibilities of guilt which may take shape in the fancies of their more imaginative readers. There is nothing the middle and the lower middle classes care for more than to be introduced to those unfamiliar splendours which Providence has placed beyond their reach, and, necessarily, they can never be very critical as to the beings who people these dazzling realms of mystery. No one knew that better than Eugene Sue,

sternest of all stern republicans, who, writing in the scented atmosphere of his cabinet, secured for his books an enormous sale by his glowing pictures of the luxury he branded. "Ouida," who has a good deal of the French "genius" in her, may be said to have set Englishwomen the example in that respect. She gave us her delicate Life-Guardsmen, who, like Rudolf in the 'Mysteries of Paris,' had the pluck of the bull-dog with the strength of the elephant. They could sit up the best part of the night over cigars and Curacoa punch, gambling on credit for fabulous stakes, and rise "fresh as paint" to go on duty in the morning. They walked the streets and went their nightly rounds, as the embodiment of hyper-melodramatic action. For while their aristocratic superciliousness provoked the quarrel which the weakness of their *physique* seemed to make a foregone conclusion, in reality they had muscles of steel, set in motion by the agility of the catamount. They had been trained in the boxing schools under the most scientific professors, and being in tiptop condition, notwithstanding their debauches, they could knock the heaviest of roughs out of time in the course of half-a-dozen of rounds. Nay, they always escaped those honourable scars which would scarcely have set them off in the boudoirs they frequented. Nor were the resources of their mental nature less marvellous. Brainless sybarites as they might appear to the superficial observer, with soul and body deteriorating apace like those of the confirmed opium-smoker, they could be reckoned upon at a moment's notice for a manly decision in the most momentous question, or for a heroic deed of superb self-sacrifice. For they had a code of honour and virtue of their own,

though it was a code that clashed with the old-fashioned decalogue; and if they swindled a friend or seduced his wife, they would always back his bills to any amount, or give him a meeting at the certainty of social extinction with the chances of capital punishment thrown in.

There was a touch of genius in the audacity that first played fast and loose with the confiding innocence and ignorance of the million. Of genius, we say, because these scenes and persons, being as far-fetched as fanciful, must have been invented at no small expenditure of imagination. In incidents and imagery the books reminded one of a grotesque English adaptation of the 'Arabian Nights.' And if we have expatiated on them at some length, it is simply because the mischief they must answer for is likely to survive the unnatural excitement and the extreme absurdity which were their redeeming virtues. It is hard now to get up either a laugh or a shudder at the Antinous-like Guardsman or the feline adventurer, though the hectic cheek be more haggard than ever, and the eyes may burn with sevenfold intensity of lustre. But the fact remains, as Thackeray says of one of his own burlesques, that though much of it all is absolutely unintelligible to us, "yet for the life of us we cannot help thinking that it is mighty pretty writing." The uneducated and thoughtless who have neither knowledge nor discrimination of taste, no doubt feel unmitigated admiration for those eloquent rhapsodies of lurid description. Foolish lads and girls fancy they have a reflection of high society in the most ludicrously distorted pictures and caricatures; virtue and vice are habitually confounded; and notions that might have been borrowed from the melodramas of the transpontine

theatres, are developed and even travestied in those sensational novels. Stories written for the gratification of the ordinary subscribers to Mr Mudie, are passed on in due course to be devoured by the milliners' apprentices and lawyers' clerks. There seems no reason why the young woman who admires her *beauté du diable* daily in the looking-glass, should not make the acquaintance of one of these noblemen or millionaires, who can raise her to the position her charms would adorn. Whether she may have to make away with him afterwards or no is a question she may postpone for the present; at all events, she has sufficient self-respect to feel sure that she will prove equal to that or any other emergency: while the clerk who has been plunging for sovereigns at Kingsbury or Hampton, finds a store of ready precedents at his fingers' ends for forging cheques or embezzling cash. Felonies of the kind, when extenuated by circumstances, are amiable weaknesses of the most respectable men; and if he has lingering scruples as to their strict propriety, he is taught that he need only make restitution by way of thanks-offering when his grand *coup* has answered its purpose. These stories are circulated or imitated in the columns of the "penny dreadfuls;" and just notions they must give of the rich and the well-born to the intelligent artisan relaxing from his labour. The demagogues who get a living by stirring strife between classes, and by preaching the socialism or communism by which they profit, have only to point to 'The Aristocrat, by One of Themselves.' Taking for a text the novel Miss Tompkins has composed in the back parlour of the semi-detached villa at Brixton, they exclaim, in the triumph of irresistible logic: "You maintain that the infamous aristocracy may have

good about it after all. Only read this here novel. It is evidently written by one of their 'ornaments'—by a woman born in the purple, as they call it, who drops into the Queen's palace, and dines every day with dukes and duchesses. And just see what she has got to say about them. Would you marry a wife who had been brought up like Lady Esmeralda there? Or would you care to give your hand, as an honest man, to that swindler and debauchee the Earl of Diddleham? You see that they are not only effete but rotten to the core; they batten on the sweat and blood of the people. Depend upon it, the only things to agitate for are abolition and confiscation; and if we don't send these curled heads of theirs to the guillotine, by ——— sir, they may be grateful to the clemency of the people!" The chances being that Miss Tompkins has never even had a peer pointed out to her. But is it wonderful if the agitator's invective seems justifiable and his reasoning wellnigh unanswerable? And need we be surprised if the impressible mechanic is persuaded that the shameless immorality of the upper orders cries aloud for condign punishment like that which drew destruction on the cities of the Plain?

It is refreshing to turn from the sensational novel, or from those novels of society that are as frivolous though more harmless, to the works of the gifted and powerful writers who redeem the profession from discredit and disgrace. We have lost Lord Lytton, and Dickens, and Thackeray. But in George Eliot we have a novelist who has brought her art to a perfection that has been attained by very few of her predecessors. We know that there are differences of opinion as to her later works. Differences so far, that the admirers of her earlier

books — of those 'Scenes of Clerical Life' we have alluded to — of 'Adam Bede,' and 'Silas Marner,' and 'The Mill on the Floss,' were so charmed with their vivid pictures of everyday English life, that they could have been well content had she gone on repeating them; for the simple reason that the novels we have referred to are literally nature itself — nature in ordinary thought and everyday though original types — nature in the most graphic reproductions of all that is poetic in our modern prose — nature in their simple pathos and quaint humour and drollery — nature in the varied tints of the rustic landscape, touched as lightly as sharply by the hand of an artist who has transferred her soul into the scenes she depicts. They are natural even in their most striking originality; and though the traits of the lonely misanthropic weaver, or the cross-grained old squire, come with all the force of a novel creation, yet our experience yields full conviction to their most grotesquely marked individualities. In short, all through these earlier books, genius and penetration, the shrewdest observation, and the broadest sympathies, have been at work in the common work-a-day world. We are delighted with the truths and beauties put in fresher and more attractive aspects, which fail to impress mere superficial observers. Her 'Romola' stands by itself as perhaps the most forcibly suggestive representation of the active and intellectual life of the Italy of the middle ages that is to be met with either in romance or history. In 'Middlemarch' and 'Daniel Deronda,' on the other hand, we have a far higher and wider exercise of extraordinary creative power. The sense of truth is as strong as ever, but the world we are introduced to is infinitely more ideal.

We should say that in the rich luxuriance of her imagination, in the intense and permanent realism with which her inspirations are borne in upon herself, George Eliot has excelled any writer we are acquainted with. She has a superabundance of the versatility we have noted as indispensable to the habitual writer of fiction; but her versatility takes the most unexpected forms, and rises to an altogether exceptional pitch, disporting itself in the pride of its vigour in the spheres of intellectual fancy. Like Shakespeare, she throws herself into her characters from the highest to the humblest; she breathes and thinks even in the lofty individualities which she has conjured out of the depths of her dramatic genius; so that we are more forcibly impressed perhaps by a Deronda or a Mordecai, than by Aunt Glegg or Mrs Poyser. The analysis of the human heart and of character is as subtly exhaustive in the one as in the other; but in the later books, in the shape of a story that sustains the interest throughout, you are put through a course of practical philosophy. New ideas and possibilities are perpetually dawning on you; and your faculties are kept on the stretch by a double interest, while the intellect is at once enlightened and exercised. The polish of the style is almost incomparably brilliant; pregnant thoughts are condensed into pointed sentences. Epigram follows epigram: a world of shrewd wisdom is embodied in some sententious apothegm: a whole revelation of character is touched off in a single trait. A writer like George Eliot is something more than a model and a beacon-light: she is a living protest against the tendency to deterioration of modern literature, under the growing pressure of the age and the inducements to careless

workmanship. Putting profundity of thought and deliberation of composition out of the question, each story in its minutest details bears the traces of the most elaborate care, while the English is as invariably faultless as it is eloquent.

Our friend Mrs Oliphant is another of the authors who are the salt of the contemporary generation of novelists. Indefatigably as she has exercised her ready powers, her work has never shown signs of slovenliness. Although she has varied her subjects almost indefinitely, she has never been tempted into extravagant sensationalism, nor has she invented a scene or written a page which could lay itself open to the censure of the most punctilious of moralists. And for a woman of the world, who is fully alive to its follies—for a practical novelist, who knows better than most people what is likely to gratify the fashion of the day—that is exceedingly high praise. It may be true that Mrs Oliphant has had little inducement to offend, thanks to the wonderful fertility of her imagination. She is one of the few and very fortunate writers who will evidently keep all her freshness to the last. In her ‘Mrs Margaret Maitland of Sunnyside,’—in her ‘Adam Graeme of Mossgrey,’—we had something in the character of George Eliot’s ‘Adam Bede’—save that we had rural Scotland for rural England. The books were written with a loving truthfulness, which evidently revived the happiest memories of childhood. For that very reason, they might well have been the author’s best. But Mrs Oliphant, like George Eliot, has gone on educating herself and cultivating her gifts with increasing experience. ‘Mrs Margaret Maitland’ was delightful in its quaint simplicity; but in ‘The Minister’s Wife,’ which was published very many

years later, we had all the bright simplicity of its predecessor, with a far deeper tinge of thought. Apart altogether from its impressive situations—from scenes that might have been harrowing had they been dictated by inferior taste—we had those admirable reflections of the fervid Celtic temperament, and of earnest Scottish religious life, which were given in the story of the revival in the remote Highland parish. Encouraged by the success of ‘The Minister’s Wife,’ an ordinary writer might have been tempted to a vein where the genuine metal must have been quickly exhausted. But Mrs Oliphant had the tact and intelligence to draw upon other resources. She turned her humour again towards the English Church, and the sober vulgarities of the Dissenting communion, which she had already hit off to admiration in her ‘Chronicles of Carlingford.’ Since ‘The Minister’s Wife’ we have had ‘Phœbe Junior,’ which took us back among acquaintances we had never forgotten; and ‘Valentine, and his Brother’ in a very different style, and a dozen or more of admirable promiscuous stories, which our readers will remember at least as well as we. Nor among lady authors must we forget Miss Thackeray, whose bright and graceful books may be quoted in proof of hereditary genius, though she has neither her father’s power of satire nor his inclination to it. Nothing can be purer than her thought, or more finished than her style. Some of her pictures of Norman life in particular, both in landscape and figure painting, show wonderful felicity of touch, with warm delicacy of colouring; and something of similar praise we may bestow on the ingenious author of ‘Vera’ and the ‘Hôtel du Petit St Jean.’

We have no idea of making a catalogue of the novelists who show

what novel-making ought to be ; and even when we single out some half-dozen of names, we admit there is a wide diversity of tastes. But as we may appear to have been somewhat sweeping in depreciatory general criticism, some of the brilliant and thoughtful artists, who prove the rule by exception, deserve a passing notice. No one is more original than Mr Blackmore. His 'Lorna Doone' is one of the stories that gain and grow on you by repeated reading. It is a perfect handbook to some of the most picturesque districts of Devonshire, and a storehouse of legendary and archaeological information. Yet that is perhaps among its lesser merits. For no living novelist is more master of the art of introducing one to the innermost intimacy of his personages. Our liking for John Ridd changes, like that of Lorna, into affection and esteem, as we learn to appreciate the striking and straightforward qualities of that sturdy representative of the English yeomanry. Nor is Lorna herself less of a reality to us ; while the casual references to such personages as the savage Chancellor bring out the man to the life in his coarseness and moral deformity. So in the 'Maid of Sker,' and in 'Alice Lorraine.' The writer is in love with each feature of the landscapes among the cliffs on the coast of Devon, and in the pastoral solitudes of the South Downs ; while he has an instinct for the judicious introduction of such telling though truculent eccentricities as his Ensor Doone or his Parson Chowne. He has the talent of using his reading without being pedantic, and he beats sensational drivellers out of the field with thrilling fiction that is founded upon fact. We have already made allusion to Mr Black ; although, as we have said, he might have done more to fulfil his promise,

had he shown more of the ready versatility to which we attach such importance. The same remark will apply to Mr Hardy, though the two have very little in common. Mr Hardy is an original thinker and writer, although less original than he appears at first sight. His 'Pair of Blue Eyes,' and 'Under the Greenwood Tree,' prepared the way for his decided success in his 'Far from the Madding Crowd.' But he hardly improves with acquaintance as we should have hoped, and his excessive mannerisms become irksome. In the best things that give their flavour to his successive books, you recognise some familiar idea that you can trace back to himself. The 'Return of the Native,' which he published the other day, might have been a clever parody of the other novels we have named. In the idea and the development of the plot, as in the style of the writing—from the first page to the last, there is a labouring after originality which has rather the air of affectation. He never serves himself with a plain phrase, if he can find anything more far-fetched ; and even those humorous peasants who used sometimes to remind us of Shakespeare's gravediggers and Dogberrys begin to talk like books—that is to say, like Mr Hardy's books. We can hardly doubt that it would be well for his fame were he to strike out more boldly in fresh directions ; but at all events he deserves credit for taking a line of his own, and bestowing all reasonable pains on his execution. Of Mr Trollope and Mr Reade we have spoken already. The former has made himself a household word, and may be said to be more distinctly the family novelist than any man who has gone before him. It would be an obvious truism to remark that he is not always equal

to himself. That is one of the inevitable drawbacks on his extraordinary facility of production. But notwithstanding occasional fluctuations, he loses no ground on the whole; and should one of his books cause some disappointment, we are pretty sure to be as agreeably surprised in the next. We may remark that, artistically, he sometimes does himself injustice by writing under the obligation of bringing his work to the regulation length. For example, were it not for the by-play among his Desmoulins and his Dobbs Broughtons, we should say that his 'Last Chronicles of Barset' would have been the best book he has ever written. But when everything we can allege has been said in disfavour of him, there is no novelist who could less easily be spared, nor is there any one ready to step into his place as the confident of well-regulated love-affairs and the realistic painter of middle-class life. Nor can many writers hope for more sincere mourners than poor Major Whyte Melville. In his 'Gladiators' he showed himself admirably capable of higher work than he generally aimed at; and we have often regretted that he was not tempted to repeat one experiment that had proved singularly successful, in spite of the difficulties he chose to grapple with. In his 'Interpreter' we have some of the most dashing sketches of irregular campaigning that we remember; while in his 'Holmby House' we had brilliant pictures of the Cavaliers and Roundheads of our own civil wars. Perhaps it was but natural that he should keep to a line where he found himself placed in the first flight without an effort; and as the scholarly and gentlemanlike novelist of society, he has assuredly never been excelled. His 'Kate Coventry,' his 'Digby Grand,' &c., became at once the delight of innu-

merable readers, who were taken by their truthfulness as much as their extreme vivacity; and yet his posthumous 'Black but Comely' loses little in comparison with them. His inimitable sporting scenes, written in the fulness of knowledge and keen enthusiasm, had the rare merit of being free from the faintest trace of vulgarity; while in fire and spirit they left nothing to desire. The run in 'Kate Coventry' may rank with that immortalised by "Nimrod" in the 'Quarterly,' and it would be difficult to give it higher praise; while in his voluminous works there is nothing more brilliant than Mr Sawyer's hunting adventures in 'Market Harborough,' although he threw them off as unconsidered trifles in a single unpretentious volume.

We dare say little of two special friends of our own, since all their novels have appeared in this Magazine. It is the simple truth that it would be hard to equal and impossible to surpass Colonel Chesney's scenes of Indian warfare during the Mutiny, in his 'Dilemma;' and that we know nothing much more effectively pathetic in fiction, nor more suggestive of the vanity of human ambitions, than his heart-moving scene in the 'True Reformer,' where the autobiographer comes home from his great success in the House to the deathbed of the wife he has loved but neglected. While Colonel Lockhart, in a series of ever-improving stories, brought out after ripe and deliberate reflection, with a great deal of the family humour and all the knowledge of a finished man of the world, shows a rare gift of "fetching his public," by the sympathetic delicacy of his delightful love-making. Nor can we pass Mr James Payn over in silence, who writes almost as easily and as indefatigably as any one, but who,

possibly, is less widely popular than he deserves to be. He made a mark at once with his first novel, 'Lost Sir Massingberd;' and the two of his stories that have appeared most recently, show no diminution either of ready resource or animation. 'By Proxy' is admirably dramatic; and if Mr Payn has never travelled in China, the realism is all the more creditable to his fancy; while 'Not so Black as we are Painted,' in a very different style, is full of very good things, and dashes of genuine drollery.

We must add to our list the names of Mr Francillon and Mr Hamilton Aide; and with one more passing notice, we are done. We take Mr George MacDonald as the most conspicuous representative of the religious novelist, who makes up for tolerant latitude of opinion by seriousness of convictions and purpose. We confess that we do not fancy either the school or the style. *Æsthetically* speaking, making religious discussion the substance of a story, is almost assuring its failure. You are always digressing into speculation on dogmas, and turning chapter after chapter into devotional discourses; while the action is provokingly kept in suspense. The characters having a single dominating idea, which they rightly regard as of absorbing importance, are naturally disposed to prose over it till they are apt to become intolerable bores. It is true that the practical outcome of their peculiar opinions, and the line of conduct they adopt from motives the most conscientious and praiseworthy, is often bold and original enough. So Mr MacDonald has an abundance of the perfervid imagination of the Highlander; but it generally shows itself in speculation and transcendental poetry: and in the ordinary business of the novelist's

art, he is most happy where he has been personally at home. He never wrote anything more lifelike than 'Alec Forbes of Howglen;' and its earlier chapters are the most attractive, where he is following the fortunes of the Scotch schoolboy from the parish school to Aberdeen college.

The profession of the novelist is said to be not what it once was. The trade, like most others, has been overstocked; and the profits have been declining accordingly, so far as the publication in book-form is concerned. As to the overstocking, there can be no question; and we do not see that time is likely to bring a remedy to that. The frenzy for scribblings shows every sign of spreading; and so long as the profit is not merely a secondary consideration, but authors are actually willing to pay for the honours of print, so long will they find publishers, and probably readers. But we believe that brighter days are in store for the craftsmen who unite skill to talent; and indeed the revolution in that direction is already in progress. We have adverted to the strange changes that have come about since the mere fact of putting his name to a novel was decidedly a feather in a man's cap, and the novelists of any note might be almost reckoned upon the fingers. Then a clever book was sure of an extensive sale: the last work of a man of mark and ability served as an advertisement of the next; and as reviews were comparatively few and far between, a laudatory article in the leading journal was in itself an encouragement to a second edition. Now praise has become cheap as novels have become common. Hardly anybody dreams of buying the three volumes; the circulating libraries are chary of their orders, passing a single copy through any number of hands;

and the tardy approbation of the critics gives but slight impulse to the sale. So far as the best men are concerned, the misfortune is that they are habitually undersold. If no novels were brought out but those that were likely to pay their way handsomely, their writers might command the markets and make their terms for reasonable remuneration. Were only some score or so of books published in the season, librarians who had boxes to fill would be found to give their orders accordingly. As it is, they have any number of books, in every gradation of quality, to choose from; and "lots" may always be picked up on exceedingly easy terms. There are publishers who do a regular trade in what may be fairly called rubbish, and it is there that the multiplication of inferior writers becomes most noxious to the profession as an art. The aspirant to literary honours comes to drive a bargain, which may be arranged in different ways. If he is unknown, and seems unlikely to make many acquaintances, he may actually have to put his hand in his purse or set his name to a guarantee. The novel comes to the birth in due course, and he has a foretaste of the proud joys of paternity. There are the three tangible volumes, their binding resplendent in blue and gold. The practised eye, with a glance inside, "samples" them off with intuitive appreciation. The first impression may be of wide margins and scantily filled pages, and is probably confirmed by the vacuity and shallowness of which these are the visible types. It is the immortal old story of sentiment and love, spun out to the very extremity of attenuation. The sparkle is all spangle and tinsel; the interest is hammered out like goldbeaters' leaf. But after all, it is a novel in form, and

will have its place in the library catalogues. Habitual and hardened novel-readers who write for books are often hard driven to make a selection, and are caught by a well-sounding title, or even attracted by the promise of a novice's name. In no case does the librarian undertake to supply exactly what his customers ask for; and his boxes must be made up with a proportion of padding. Subscribers write time after time for some particular book. Time after time, they have what they don't want sent in place of it, till they give the attempt up in despair. So the items of Falstaff's hostel-bill are reversed. There is an intolerable quantity of insipid and unwholesome bread to a modicum of sound and stimulating sack; and the demand for clever novels is kept down by the mass of trash that is being shot out upon the book-market. The material loss is caused in this way. The libraries have but a certain sum at their command, which they are bound to distribute among various publishers; and however small the number of copies may be which they take of a bad book, they have the less to spend—should there be many books—upon the good ones.

If the professional novelist lived by the actual sale of his books, he would speedily cut the profession in disgust; and it is a curious speculation whether the strike of the skilled might starve the public and the librarians into more discriminating patronage. But luckily, both for the novelist and his readers, there are other channels open to him—and channels that are multiplying and widening. If he pass his story through a leading magazine, its fortune is half made in advance; and in respect to its future he is comparatively on velvet. He gets a handsome price for each instalment; nor does the circulation

in serial form injure its subsequent publication : indeed we have been informed by experts who ought to know, that, according to their experience, it rather improves it. And the magazines that rely chiefly on their fiction are multiplying likewise, although scarcely in proportion to the increase of novel-writing ; while there are illustrated papers that publish serials, and weekly literary and social papers which are borrowing leaves from the books of the French *feuilletons*. Some of these pay well ; others very indifferently ; but, at all events, the man who has been aiming high has the certainty of hedging against an absolute miscarriage.

The medium of magazine-publication is an unspeakable boon to authors, for genius must live somehow, and is dependent on its comforts if not on luxury. Even a writer who throws himself heartily into his parts, need not go in for the *Persicos apparatus* of a Balzac, who inspired himself for describing the artistic sensuality of a "Balthasar Claes," by heaping his apartments with the most costly "properties" of Flemish laces and sculptures. But like Balzac he must have his coffee and other stimulants, though he may refrain from carrying indulgence in them to excess ; and like Dumas the elder he must mingle in society, although he may care less to sparkle in it than the all-accomplished author of 'Monte Christo.' It demands the strength of youth and no ordinary resolution to write even the matter-of-fact history of a Joseph Sell when you are starving upon crusts and water in a garret—see Borrow's confessions in his 'Romany Rye.' The easy play of the imagination depends on external conditions ; and the sacred fire burns low if body or mind is exhausted. To get up his facts a man must go

abroad ; he must pay for his cabs and his kid gloves : and it will be money well spent if he makes occasional return for the hospitalities he receives. To do fair justice to himself and his subject, he should be free from debt, and, if possible, from cares. Unless he has a Balzac's rare power of abstraction, we can hardly conceive the flow of thought going in concert with the rattle of duns on his door-knocker ; and there is inconsistency in realising a touching love-scene while a nurseryful of children are clamouring for bread. So genius must, of course, make money as it can ; and not only be thankful, but be a gainer in all respects. Yet unquestionably the very general practice of serial-writing is in some ways unfavourable to the better style of art. When Dickens was at the height of his fame, and his green covers in the flush of their popularity ; when he used to ride out to Hampstead or Richmond, with his confidant Mr Forster, that he might lighten suspense as much as possible till he had heard the results of the sales, readers of the *Life* will remember with what thought he prepared each separate instalment for isolated effect. The temptation to do so is exceedingly strong, for the public is shortsighted and peremptory in its judgment ; tameness is the one unpardonable sin ; and it will seldom possess its soul in patience, because it may hope for brighter things in our next. There are magazines and magazines, as we have reason to know. There are editors who rest on their reputation, and can afford to stand on it ; who prefer a consecutive and finished piece of work to the garish patchwork of forced sensation. But there are editors, again, who will have a succession of striking effects, like the *tableaux* that succeed each other on

the stage, or the shifting scenes of a panorama. How is it possible to be fairly true to nature? how, indeed, can one avoid the wildest incongruities, if you have to scatter your murders and suicides at short intervals of a chapter or two? Even in the purely sensational point of view, you discount the possibilities of an effective climax. Yet, on the other hand, what in most cases becomes an abuse may possibly prove serviceable to certain authors. For the sense that each separate instalment is so far complete in itself may act as an antidote to listlessness and dullness. And should the story be dragging, the monthly *critiques* bring the vanity of authorship up to the mark again.

Then the author may arrange for simultaneous publication in some of the foreign magazines. The pirates of the United States are anticipated by the forwarding of early proof-sheets, which is altogether without prejudice to the popular writer reaping the barren glories of a cheap notoriety by being set in circulation through the cars and at the book-stalls in stitched covers, priced at a few cents. He makes his bargain in the meantime for some solid pudding. There is, of course, a very probable hitch; and the chances are that neither 'Harper's' nor 'The Atlantic' manage to make an opening for the English celebrity at the moment that suits his English publishers. But failing that, or failing a well-paying magazine anywhere, there are other resources that begin to open to him. There is an immense demand for fiction in the flourishing Australasian colonies; and they are scarcely so successful in raising native novelists as in other classes of valuable stock. Besides, the range of colonial observation is circumscribed, and squatters and merchants there know enough of the gold-diggings, the export trade,

the bushrangers, and the cattle-runs. They have cravings for the romance of the Old World, and enlightenment as to fashionable and political society. So it is no wonder that their enterprising newspaper proprietors have been tightening up their loosely printed columns of advertisements, and making room for novels "by eminent hands." In place of relying on the bursts of criminal and political sensation that come to them spasmodically by the European mails, they find it pays them to supply it daily or weekly, and they pay in return exceedingly well. So very general has this duplex system become, that a certain prolific novelist assures us, not only that he has never published a story except as a serial in the first instance, but that he has never published one which has not appeared simultaneously at least in one colony or foreign settlement, while the majority have done so in three or four, including, in one very recent case, even Yokohama: while another popular writer is accustomed to gauge civilisation in foreign parts by the test, "Do they or do they not take my serial novels?" and we are sorry to say that that flourishing colony, New Zealand, stands lowest in the scale when judged by this standard. Partly for similar reasons, this example is being followed by the periodical press in England. A group of country papers clubbed together, transact their business in the novel-market through a central agency that places itself directly in communication with the author. They can afford to offer him liberal terms, and weekly proofs are circulated among the subscribers. The people who buy are, for the most part, of the class who have few dealings with the circulating libraries, and rarely, indeed, read anything in the shape of a printed

book. But, on the other hand, they are precisely the class who like to have good value for their pennies, and who conscientiously spell through each line in a page from the first column to the last. We can conceive what a refreshment to them an exciting story is, as a change from the advertisements of the antibilious pills and Mr Thorley's food for fattening cattle. No doubt that taste will spread, while editors can afford to become proportionately enterprising in gratifying it. In the meantime, as we happen to know, one of those popular novelists we have just been mentioning, had the offer of selling his last book to the Association for an exceedingly handsome sum. Nay, to prove how far the system is capable of being worked, we may mention that the 'Pickwick Papers' have recently been republished in a cheap Sheffield journal. Thrown in for a penny with the miscellaneous matter, and read aloud in the family circle, they anticipate the schoolmaster in the lowest depths

of the humblest social strata; and immigrants from the wilds of Kerry and Connemara are making the acquaintance of Mr Winkle and Mr Samuel Weller. We question whether these uneducated intelligences may not be as capable critics as many of their betters: they are at least as likely to prefer the freshness of nature to the artificial essences of the boudoirs and of the perfumers. And writers of merit may avail themselves of opening fields which are practically closed to the sentimentalists and false sensationalists. But though Baron Tauchnitz pays English authors liberally, the income derived from absolutely foreign sources—that is, in the way of translation—is but small. The French praise and higgie, and do not generally avail themselves of British talent till the term of international copyright has expired, when they can translate the work for nothing; and the same, though perhaps in a less degree, may be said of the Germans.

THE GREAT UNLOADED.

He called himself the Reverend James Johnstone, M.A. There are some grounds for believing that his Christian name was James; on the other hand, there are the strongest grounds for doubting whether his surname was Johnstone. It matters not; he lives in my memory as "The Great Unloaded."

My eldest brother Tom has a property in Scotland called Bogmore, not of great extent, but with very good mixed shooting. Personally he never cared much for shooting; and when he took actively to politics a few years ago, he practically handed over the charge of the game to his younger brothers. I usually appeared at Bogmore in the end of July or beginning of August, and remained until the middle of October. But in 187— I spent the whole of August on the Continent, and the first fortnight in September with a friend in England, and so did not reach Bogmore Castle until the 17th or 18th of September.

I arrived in time for a late dinner. On entering the drawing-room I found that its sole occupant was a man who was standing at one of the windows. The evening was dark, and I could only see that he was tall and bulky. He turned towards me, and I bowed, and said something about just arriving in time for dinner.

"Mr Francis Douglas, I feel sure by the voice," said the unknown. "How like your good brother's it is!" and he wrung me warmly by the hand.

Further conversation was prevented by the arrival of the rest of the party, and in a few minutes we were in the dining-room. "Mr Johnstone," said my brother, and

the unknown waved a hand over his glasses, muttered some words inaudibly, and we all sat down.

It was plain from the outset that dinner was a serious thing with Mr Johnstone. He adjusted his napkin as a man who has a long cold drive before him adjusts his rug, and at once possessing himself of the nearest *menu*, read it diligently from beginning to end. After a minute's anxious reflection he raised his head, and then for the first time I had an opportunity of examining his face. It was massive and well shaped, and of a uniform red, with the exception of the brow. The eyebrows were shaggy, and the eyes, so far as visible (for he wore enormous spectacles), were large and brown. He was clean shaven; the lower part of the face was broad and somewhat sensual, but when he smiled his expression was very winning. He appeared to be between forty and fifty years of age. He conversed little during dinner, and ate almost incessantly, but with great discrimination. Once I saw an expression of reproachful regret come over his face, like a cloud over a frosty sun, when, after accepting and beginning operations on some grouse, he perceived that there was also woodcock. He murmured "tut, tut!" softly, looked again at the *menu* (in which woodcock did not appear), and glanced reproachfully at my sister-in-law ere he resumed his grouse.

Dinner over, on the motion of Mr Johnstone, instead of joining the ladies we adjourned to the billiard-room, where I was formally introduced to him. In the course of conversation I mentioned that I had been at Trinity College, Cambridge.

"Why, you're a Cambridge man, Johnstone, are you not?" said Tom.

"Ah! those Trinity swells know nothing of poor little Corpus, I suppose."

I was forced to admit that I did not know a single man in Corpus, whereupon he began to enlarge upon his university exploits. By his own account he must have been in the university eleven, and one of the best racket and tennis players of his day. He spoke by name of several dons, whom I knew, and asked if they still kept up their tennis. That he could play billiards I was left in no doubt, as, during our conversation, he gave me 30 in 100, and beat me easily.

"Do you shoot, Mr Johnstone?" I inquired, to exhaust the list of his accomplishments.

"Ah! there," he said, laying down his cue, "you boys have the pull of the old man. I love it, but I can't do it. Never can get my gun off in time; and if I could, there's usually nothing in it. I'm a heavy man, and slow at my fences; I draw my cartridges and forget to replace them. But, Douglas, I must be off, or Linton and John will be dragging the Tay for me." And with these words he took his leave.

"And now, Tom," I said, "who is your friend?"

Tom thereupon made a somewhat disjointed statement to the following effect: He first met Mr Johnstone in the beginning of August at a *table d'hôte* luncheon in the hotel of S—, a neighbouring village which is rapidly being converted into a fashionable summer resort. Mr Johnstone, in the course of conversation, explained that he was in holy orders, with a living in the south of England (the name of which was never revealed); and that, following high academic example,

he had come into the wilds for the purpose of coaching or grinding one young gentleman (who sat next him) for his matriculation at Cambridge in the following October. He told Tom that this young fellow's name was George Linton, and that he had a considerable fortune, and was extremely well connected, so highly and irregularly, indeed, that he (Mr Johnstone) dared not whisper the quarter. Mr Johnstone further stated that he was in search of suitable lodgings, but could find none in the overcrowded village. Now it so happened that at this time there was standing empty a cottage belonging to Tom called "The Nest." It had until recently been always occupied by a watcher; but its last occupant having watched the game more on his own account than that of his master, was in respect thereof dismissed; and Tom, who was very dilatory, had not filled up his place. Before the end of luncheon "The Nest" was let for an indefinite number of weeks to Mr Johnstone and his "beloved charge," as he was pleased to call him. How the watcher's place was filled the sequel will show.

On cross-examination Tom admitted that he had seen a good deal of his tenants since the beginning of their lease; that he had given young Linton (who did not care for shooting) unlimited permission to fish both for salmon and trout; and that, in addition to frequently asking Johnstone to shoot, he had given him leave to roam at large, with or without his gun (his "toy" he called it—it was as large as a howitzer), over the moor adjoining "The Nest." At this statement I, as head-keeper in vacation, gave a whistle of dismay.

"You need not be alarmed," said Tom, "he can't hit a haystack. As he said himself when he asked

leave, 'My toy is company to me, and can't hurt a living thing.' Poor old Johnstone! you would have laughed if you had seen him yesterday, with his gun at half-cock and unloaded, hanging on to a bird till it went leisurely out of sight. But you can judge for yourself to-morrow; I asked him to come and go out with you."

And come he did, and again and yet again; and proved himself to be first-rate company, but the worst of shots. He perpetually drew his cartridges, and forgot to replace them. It was this ridiculous habit which earned for him the title of "The Great Unloaded." But he was quite safe; not merely owing to the frequent absence of cartridges, but in the management of his gun. And so September rolled away, and October came in. By this time Mr Johnstone had become universally popular, except in one quarter—the Episcopalian clergyman of the place. This gentleman tried again and again, but without success, to induce Mr Johnstone to take or assist him in his services. Mr Johnstone said that he made it an invariable rule to refuse such requests, and that his holiday would be no holiday if he once gave in.

With this exception there were no bounds to his popularity. The young fellows liked him because he made them laugh. He had been educated, I cannot doubt, at an English public school, and one of the great English universities; and he had accordingly a fund of experiences to relate. He had a way of interlarding his conversation with quaint words and phrases that was very taking; and, but for his cloth, he would doubtless have been a perfect mint of strange oaths. Then his laugh, especially at his own jokes, was most infectious—a rich gurgling laugh expressive of deep enjoyment, and

accompanied by a quivering of the whole frame.

By the ladies he was equally beloved; partly on account of his prowess at lawn-tennis, and partly (this was an instance of the converse of courting the child for the sake of the nurse) for the sake of his "beloved charge," who was currently believed to be a nobleman in disguise or temporary disgrace.

To Tom he had become indispensable. He was a good talker, and, when it suited him, a better listener. He allowed Tom to hold forth to him for hours upon his hobby for the time—politics, agriculture, the relations of capital and labour, or whatever it might be; and just spoke enough to show that he was listening intelligently. These conversations were utter destruction to shooting, as not a bird within earshot would sit; but then neither Tom nor his tenant cared much for shooting.

While the return of October brings in pheasant-shooting, it sends undergraduates (and their coaches) back to their labours; so, to accommodate Mr Johnstone, Tom good-naturedly agreed to shoot his best coverts in the second week of October. The autumn shooting at Bogmore is of a most enjoyable kind. The bags are not enormous, but there is a chance of getting all kinds of game, including black-game, woodcock (which breed there), and occasionally roe.

On the 10th of October "The Great Unloaded" arrived punctually, accompanied by his man John (surname unknown), his "toy," and a sack of cartridges, loaded, it may be here mentioned, with sawdust-powder. This same sawdust-powder, which was at that time on its probation, Mr Johnstone preferred to the powder of commerce, because (as he explained) it caused less concussion and less smoke, and also

(as he did not explain, but as I now believe) because it made less noise. The beat before lunch was one of the best in the day's work; and special pains were taken to post the best guns in the best places—and, of necessity, the bad shots in the worst. Mr Johnstone, accordingly, was relegated to a spot of great natural beauty, which was usually unprofaned by a shot. He was not told this, so he went to his post blithely. To punish us for thus grossly deceiving a good man, no sooner were the beaters well off, than it was seen that, contrary to their usual custom, the inhabitants of the wood, both furred and feathered, were, with one accord, flocking to "The Great Unloaded's" corner. It was necessary to reinforce him at once.

"Run, Frank," shouted Tom—"run on to the gate and head them! they are breaking away in scores. Poor old Johnstone is being mobbed." Would that I had left him to his fate; he could have endured it. I at once hurried up the hill to the rescue, only to find that reinforcements were neither desired nor required. Tom might have "stowed" his pity; poor old Johnstone was doing pretty well in his painful position.

As I rapidly approached the scene of the reverend gentleman's labours, I heard the incessant report of the sawdust-cartridges; and on coming within twenty or twenty-five yards of the spot, a remarkable sight met my view. "The Great Unloaded" was transformed: he was spectaclled and unloaded no longer; as he would have said himself, "Spectacles wos out, cartridges wos in!" He stood with his back towards me, at one side of a ride, with his great eyes, unobscured by glasses, raking the covert opposite. The ground around was strewn with game. Just as I arrived a

cock-pheasant came rocketing over his head; he took it as it came, dropped it neatly at his feet, and reloaded in an instant. I was about to compliment him on his success, when to my astonishment his man John, who had picked up the bird, proceeded to put it into an enormous inside pocket in his coat. His master at once objected to this, but not on the ground I should have expected and hoped. "Not him, John—not him; how often must I remind you, he's as tough as old boots? No, no; give Mr Douglas his dues. Oh, the florid taste of the uneducated and unrefined! Ha! my young and artless maiden, my white-fleshed darling!"—and oh, shame! down came a young hen-pheasant—"this is sad; here to-day, in the pot to-morrow: pouch her, John; she's worth ten of her worthy old sire."

And so he ran on, speaking partly to himself and partly to John, and killing everything that showed itself with rapidity and accuracy. No protracted aim, no empty barrels here. After killing a pheasant and an old blackcock right and left, he exclaimed—

"James! James!" (this is my authority for believing his name to be James) "this is imprudent! but I must let out to-day. Nothing more in your line, thank you. *Monsieur le vieux Alphonse* may proceed to the bosom of his family."

The last remark was addressed to an old hare which had hobbled on to the ride, and sat up listening. At this point a cry of "woodcock" arose. If Mr Johnstone was excited before, he was electrified now. He waited with admirable patience while the graceful bird wound its way through the tops of the young trees; but as it darted across the ride, he dropped it tenderly on the turf. The sawdust seemed scarcely to whisper as it slew the delicate

morsel. John stepped forward to pick it up. "John! John! leave that bird alone; lay not your sacrilegious hand upon it."

He then advanced, picked it up, stroked its feathers admiringly, and (oh, wonder!) carefully deposited it in one of his pockets, apostrophising it thus, as he did so: "You feathered joy, you condensed pleasures of the table, so succulent yet so portable, so young yet so thoughtful, flying from the rash ignorance of youth to the experienced palate of age!"

Cries of "woodcock" again.

"Oh, James, this is too—too much!"

Down came the bird; and it was picked up, stroked, patted, apostrophised, and pouched in the same way as its deceased relative. Mr Johnstone then extended the fingers of his left hand, and thereon with the forefinger of his right hand impressively counted four. I now believe that the true meaning of this operation was that the reverend rascal had that day shot and pocketed four woodcock. Suddenly there came a wild cry of "roe to the left;" Johnstone with the rapidity of lightning changed his cartridges and tore off in that direction.

I stood speechless with astonishment; by degrees my bewilderment yielded to indignation, and that again, as I took in the true meaning of the scene, to a feeling of intense amusement. Neither Johnstone nor John had observed me—they were too much occupied—so I cautiously withdrew and returned to my old post. The beat was soon over, and lunch appeared, and with it Mr Johnstone, spectacled once more and radiant from exertion and triumph. He had slain the roe; the news did not now much surprise me.

"A game-bag for Mr Johnstone," cried Tom; and Johnstone lowered himself on to it with a restful sigh,

taking care, I observed, not to sit down on the pockets which contained his spoil.

"Well, how did the 'toy' work to-day, your Reverence? There were not many pauses in its discourse," said Tom.

"I blush," said Mr Johnstone, "from the novelty of the situation; a few thoughtless birds and beasts have positively come against my gun and hurt themselves."

"Did you see any woodcock?"

"You make me blush again, Douglas, but from another cause; I admit with shame that I not only saw but fired at *four*."

This was indeed playing with fire; but I think that, notwithstanding his reckless effrontery, I should have spared him, had he not gratuitously attacked me at random upon a sore subject.

"By the way, Master Frank," (how familiar he had become!) "were you the inhuman monster who shot off an old cock's tail? He wobbled past me, and he looked so miserable without his rudder, that I put him out of pain."

Now I *had* had a snap shot at a cock-pheasant, and I *had* shot off his tail; but I hoped to escape exposure, and this was too much for my temper.

"It's a pity you killed him," I said; "he's not worth picking up—he's as tough as old boots."

At the moment I used these suggestive words, Mr Johnstone's mouth was full of something good. He looked reflectively at me, and swallowed his morsel very deliberately before he replied.

"Well, that is the strangest reason for not shooting a bird I ever heard; how far does your prejudice extend, Frank?"

"I draw the line at woodcock."

"At woodcock, you young sybarite! why, I don't believe you know what trail is."

"As I was saying, Mr Johnstone, I draw the line at woodcock. They are such feathered joys, so succulent yet so portable——"

Mr Johnstone here dropped his plate and started to his feet. What had happened? Mr Johnstone had, he said, been sitting unawares on an ant's nest. He shook himself, flicked himself, and mopped himself all over; and then, shifting his game-bag nearer Tom, plunged into a political discussion which lasted until lunch was over. His were "fast colours," and as he could not blush, so was he incapable of turning white or green. He showed no further signs of agitation or discomfort.

No sooner had I allowed the unmistakable word "succulent" to escape me than I repented; I had (as I still have) a sneaking liking for "The Great Unloaded," and from that moment I determined to screen him if I could. Nothing worth recording occurred during the afternoon; and as the last beat finished near "The Nest," we bade Mr Johnstone good night there. A long good night, as I have not seen him since.

I was not much surprised when, next morning, Tom received a note from "The Nest" to the following effect:—

MY DEAR DOUGLAS,—By the time this reaches you I shall be in Edinburgh on my way south. That disobliging ass Vickers has telegraphed to say that he cannot take my duty next Sunday. So "*cedant arma togæ*," down with the gun, on with the surplice. My affections remain with you and your birds and bunnies. With many thanks for a most enjoyable summer from my beloved charge and myself, I remain yours faithfully,

JAMES JOHNSTONE.

P.S.—Remember me kindly to Frank.

He was much lamented by the whole party, including myself; and his sudden departure cast a gloom over the day's sport, although perhaps more of the game shot was *picked up* than on the day before.

I frequently found myself during and since that day trying to form a dispassionate estimate of this great man's character. I firmly rejected the idea that he had acted from any criminal motive. Indeed it would not have been easy to frame a charge against him. He was neither trespasser nor poacher; he had Tom's express permission to walk over his ground and shoot his game if he could. And as to his appropriation of the game when shot—why, from a legal point of view, the birds were, strictly speaking, his by right of capture, not Tom's. Turning then with relief from the at first sight criminal aspect of the case, what remained? I could not disguise from myself that there was a pretty perceptible dash of moral obliquity in the conduct of "The Great Unloaded." He had beyond doubt pretended that he could not shoot, while he could shoot like a Walsingham. What was the motive for this duplicity? At one time I was afraid I should have to answer this question in a way very discreditable to my reverend friend. In the course of a cautious investigation which I instituted, I ascertained from the station-master at S—— that packages labelled "perishable" were frequently despatched southwards by Mr Johnstone during his tenancy of "The Nest." Mr Johnstone had been good enough to explain that these mysterious consignments were Scotch delicacies for the consumption of his aged mother. There was no further evidence of their contents; and of this at least I felt sure, that if they did contain game, no "feathered joys" found their way into the London

market or into the mouth of the dowager Mrs Johnstone. And this leads me to the only conclusion for which there seems to be some solid foundation,—namely, that even if profit formed a factor in Mr Johnstone's little game, his leading motive was to provide constant material for the pleasures of the table in which his soul delighted. And was he to be severely condemned for this? Suppose, reader, that you shot a woodcock unobserved; what would you do? Tell about it, no doubt, and to every one you saw. Moved thereto by honesty unadorned? Has not vanity a little to do with it? To test the matter, say, did you ever shoot one, and allow it to be supposed for one moment that any one else shot it? Probably not. It comes, then, to this—which is the meaner vice, vanity or greed? But perhaps I am rather a partial advocate; or perhaps, after all, the fault lay in the woodcock being so portable.

In the course of my investigation I made a few inquiries in other quarters concerning "The Great Unloaded's" mode of life during his tenancy of "The Nest;" but little transpired that did not redound to his credit. His rent and his tradesmen's bills were paid in full through

a local solicitor. It may be mentioned parenthetically that while his grocer's bill for sauces and condiments was considerable and constant, his butcher's bill was small and intermittent, especially from and after the 12th of August. I tried to draw his late cook, a remarkably shrewd old Scotchwoman; but her deafness when I trenched on delicate ground was that of the nether millstone. I honour her for her loyalty, and I only trust that she was not under the spell of a more tender passion. She and her master had been thrown much together, as he spent a large portion of each day in the kitchen; and to see much of Mr Johnstone was to love him. Fortunately love and admiration of a worthy object bring their reward with them. So great was Mr Johnstone's fame as a good liver, that Kitty M'Isaac has ever since commanded her own price as a cook.

But was he the Reverend James Johnstone, M.A., of Corpus College, Cambridge? Surely this admitted of easy ascertainment. Well, I have not examined the books of Corpus or the clergy list, and I cannot tell. But if that name is to be found therein, I think I can safely say to its lawful owner, *non de te fabula narratur*.

CLIMATE IN THE LEVANT.

IN the month of July last, Europe was surprised by the announcement that Cyprus had been handed over by the Sultan, to be administered by the English Government; and the news had hardly been published when questions were asked, by members of the Opposition in Parliament, regarding the alleged unhealthy climate of the island. Such questions were not easily answered. Our information with regard to the Levant is at present most imperfect; and as no scientific data regarding the country were available, the Government could not be expected to give more than a very general reply.

Luckily for the Opposition—though unfortunately for many gallant men in the fine regiments ordered to Cyprus—the course of political events necessitated that the occupation of the island should be undertaken at the commencement of the most unhealthy period of the year; and our troops were consequently quartered in the plains and lower hills during four of the hottest months, and were at first but ill provided with even the necessaries of healthy life. It cannot be doubted that much of the sickness which resulted was due to the general want of experience, and to the neglect of certain precautions well known to those familiar with the Levantine climate. We in fact paid dearly at first for experience by which no doubt we shall profit, if, at any future time, it should again become necessary to mass English regiments in Cyprus.

A simple instance of the imprudences committed may be quoted from the letters of one of the newspaper correspondents. Shortly after his arrival he writes enthusiastically

to describe the cool retreat, in a garden beside a channel of running water, where he had set his tent. Any one who had lived long in Syria or Cyprus would have anticipated the result, for in the next letter the correspondent informs us that he is suffering from fever. Had he taken up his abode in a stony field or on a dusty roadside, his quarters would no doubt have been hot and uncomfortable, but they would have been far safer for health than a spot shut out from the wind and situated close to water.

The season of the year and the inexperience of our troops were circumstances which combined in a most remarkable manner to lend a semblance of truth to the idea that the climate of Cyprus was so pestiferous as to make it impossible for Englishmen to inhabit the island. Thus the outcry grew louder as the season became more unhealthy, and it was announced by the opponents of the Government that our newly-acquired possession would have to be abandoned.

It may be remarked, in passing, that a similar argument would deprive us of many an important station now held by England for centuries. If Cyprus is to be surrendered because it is unhealthy, why not Malta with its well-known ague, or Gibraltar because of the rock-fever? still more, Jamaica, where the fearful yellow fever is always to be dreaded; or even India, from which hundreds of our fellow-countrymen return every year invalided by climate alone?

This is not the spirit which has made England great. It is not the spirit which brought our Ashantee war—a combat against climate rather than against any human

enemy—to a successful issue. The very obstinacy of Englishmen—which makes it so difficult to induce them to observe such precautions as are necessitated by trying climates—may perhaps be regarded as only a sign of the indomitable will that has made us masters of so great a portion of the world. Nevertheless, he who enters into a struggle with climate, refusing to submit to any restraint to which he is unaccustomed in our own country, has challenged an enemy whose strength he little knows, and by whom he is certain finally to be overcome.

The geographical position of Cyprus is one of so great political importance, that, were the climate far more unhealthy than it is in reality, it might still be our duty to hold the island. It is “a strong place of arms” commanding the Mediterranean adit to the valley of the Euphrates, and situated close to that position in Syria which covers the Suez Canal: it is a vantage-ground where, behind our own frontier, we might, in preparing for war, mass our troops and collect our stores at a short distance from the front, as is rendered necessary by the rapidity of modern strategical movements. This is the value of Cyprus to England; and the question which should be now asked is not, “Is the island sufficiently healthy to make it a charming residence or a favourite station?”—but rather, “What are the means by which the climate, if it is in reality bad, may be improved? and what are the precautions to be observed by our troops in order to secure the least possible amount of sickness in quarters?”

It is not, however, with Cyprus alone that we may perhaps be ultimately concerned. Cyprus is indeed the base; but if it has any value, it is because operations on the mainland may at some future

time become necessary for the protection of our roads to India. We may therefore well extend the inquiry further, and seek to become better acquainted with the climate of the Levant as a whole, more especially with that of Syria, from the Gulf of Alexandretta as far as the sandy shores of Gaza, to which the Cyprian climate appears, so far as has been ascertained, to present a very close similarity.

A certain amount of definite scientific information has already been collected which will aid us in this inquiry. For ten years a series of meteorological observations have been kept by H.M.'s Consul-General at Beirut, and at 'Aleih in the Lebanon. At Jerusalem, Gaza, Jaffa, and Nazareth, observatories have been in existence for some time. General remarks on the climate of portions of Northern Syria have been sent in by our consuls, and are to be found in their reports. A regular series of observations have been made by the English Survey party in all parts of Southern Syria, including the Jordan valley, the climate of which may well be expected to prove extraordinary. The general result both of these observations and of personal experience will be here given as briefly as possible, in order that a correct estimate may be deduced of the character of the climate with which we have to deal, and a clear idea formed of the necessary precautions and possible improvements required to make the Levant habitable for Englishmen.

The climate of Syria and of Cyprus is remarkable both for the sudden local contrasts which it presents, and for the regular recurrence of its annual changes.

In the short distance of 150 miles, we find, in the Jordan valley, a climate ranging from the polar to the tropical—a flora including the

Arctic shrubs of Hermon and the African flowers of Jericho. Near the Dead Sea the humming-birds may be seen fluttering gaily in January; while, almost in sight, is a mountain on which the Syrian bears are rolling in the snow.

The rugged block of Mount Casius divides, in a similar manner, the pestilent swamps of Alexandretta from the healthy bay of Seleucia; and the fever-stricken marshes of Acre are close to the healthy slopes of Carmel.

But while the climate differs thus suddenly in neighbouring localities, it cannot be called variable, because the recurrence of the change in its seasons is almost monotonous in regularity. The spring showers having fallen, the sky becomes clear; and it remains clear for six months—a deep, hard blue, scarcely ever relieved by a cloud, and only deadening to an iron-grey when the wind blows from the desert, until in autumn the land and its inhabitants seem only to subsist in expectation of the rain.

Another important feature of Levantine climate is the comparatively moderate temperature during the summer, and the refreshing difference between day and night. In addition to this advantage, the climate is rendered more healthy and agreeable by the fact that the prevailing winds, throughout the greater part of the year, blow from the south-west and west. The great heat in the interior of the country, where the Syrian desert extends eastwards towards Euphrates, is no doubt the cause of this phenomenon. The result is, that a fresh sea-breeze rises as soon as the interior country becomes heated by the sun, and blows steadily all day, dying away in the cool of the afternoon.

A few notes on the temperature of various places in Syria will serve

to give some idea of the general character of the climate. Jerusalem, for instance, 2500 feet above the sea, has a mean temperature of about 57° Fahr. throughout the year. Jerusalem is situated in latitude 31° 47', but the mean temperature is equal to that of Barcelona in latitude 41° 23'; while the mean temperature at Cairo is 65°, at Baghdad 66°, and at Catania, in latitude 37° 28', not less than 61° Fahr. Nor is the climate of the Holy City, as compared with other parts of Syria, remarkably temperate. In the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, 3000 or 4000 feet above the sea, the summer heat is much less; and at 'Aleib, 2700 feet above Beirut, a temperature of 86° is considered unusually hot. Hermon and the higher parts of Lebanon are often covered with snow throughout the year, and even in August the temperature on the lower spurs is cool and refreshing. In the plains the heat is of course greater, but the mean temperature at Beirut does not exceed 85° during the hottest month—August; and 95° is generally about the highest temperature in the shade at noon in summer.

The heat is but little felt so long as the west breeze blows. When, however, the east wind prevails, the temperature in the plains increases suddenly to 100° or 105°. In May 1873, the thermometer stood at 118° for three days in the observatory at Gaza; and this exceptional heat was experienced throughout Syria, materially damaging the harvests, and destroying the silk crop at Beirut. Such a heat is, however, quite phenomenal; and the highest reading of the thermometer in the plains, even with east wind, is very rarely above 105° Fahr. In Cyprus the temperature in the bell-tents during last July rose to 120°, which represents pro-

bably 110° in a proper observatory. This extreme heat was experienced, however, in the plains near Larnaka.

The diurnal range of temperature at Jaffa has been found, by long-continued observations, to vary from 11° to 17° Fahr. The hottest time of day is always from about 1 P.M. to 3 P.M., and the reading in the sun's rays (with a black-bulb thermometer) then rises to over 170° Fahr. By night the temperature falls rapidly; and even in August it is rarely above 64°, unless the east wind is blowing, giving a difference of no less than 30° between noon and midnight. In the plains and along the sea-coast, the lowest temperature recorded is about 36°, and even in the severest winter frost is never experienced. Thus the climate is suitable for the growth of palms and other trees liable to be affected by frost; while in the hills, even at an elevation of only 2000 feet, they will not thrive. In the mountains the winter temperature is much lower, and frost is commonly experienced; thus in the hills the vine flourishes much better than in the plains. In Lebanon and the higher ranges, snow falls thickly throughout the winter, and the cold by night is considerable even in summer.

The refreshing coolness of the Levantine nights is accompanied generally by a fall of dew much heavier than occurs even in the height of our English summer. In Cyprus also this heavy dew is experienced, and a good deal of the fever of last year was no doubt due to chills resulting from the dampness by night. Even the heavy, double Egyptian tents, commonly used by residents in the Levant, do not form a sufficient protection against the dew, which drips from the ropes in the morning and penetrates through the roof, making every article of clothing or bedding

quite damp. It is evident that the single bell-tents, unfortunately provided for our troops, must have been quite as unfitted to keep out the dew at night as they were to keep out the heat by day. A bell-tent, in fact, is about as suitable in the East as a tail-coat or a tall hat; and our commissariat may justly be blamed for not having made better provision for the wants of the troops, in a country which should have been treated as if possessing an Indian climate.

The monthly range of temperature in the Levant requires a passing notice, as connected with the question of the comparative salubrity of various seasons. The coldest month is January; and the heat increases steadily until August, a sensible difference generally occurring in the end of July. In the commencement of September the power of the sun begins to decrease, and the temperature falls with equal regularity to the minimum. In October the nights in the hills begin to become chilly; and this, as will be explained immediately, is the most dangerous month in the year.

The rainfall of Syria has been roughly computed, from a variety of observations, to average about 18 or 20 inches in the year, the rain falling for about sixty days. Thunderstorms are comparatively rare, and occur only between the months of September and March. There is, however, a great difference with respect to the amount of rain in different years; and the country throughout is subject to periodical droughts, such as occurred lately in Cyprus during three successive seasons, causing an extensive emigration of the native population.

The general result of the observations above noticed tends to give an impression which is in reality more favourable than the climate warrants. A country where the

sea-breeze blows daily, where the nights are cool, and the summer heat by day not generally higher than 95° , might at first be considered to possess unexpected advantages compared to other Eastern or Mediterranean districts. A description of the general course of the seasons will serve, however, to show how trying the climate really is to Europeans.

Soon after the vernal equinox the last April showers fall, and the dry season commences. At this period the country is seen at its best. The green corn, already tinged with yellow, covers the plains, and the flowers are in their full beauty. The huge dark leaves of the mallows—which form a staple article of food for the poorest class—cover the crumbling ruins of former cities. The delicate pink phlox grows in large beds on the hill-slopes, and the white cyclamen hides in the shady hollows. The variety and richness of the colouring in uncultivated districts have been noticed by every traveller who has written on the country; and those who merely visit Syria or Cyprus during the tourist season must carry away a very unreal impression of the usual aspect of the land.

Easter-time is also the healthiest period of the year, and hence it results that the proportion of travellers who suffer from fever is comparatively very small.

The increasing power of the sun soon kills the flowers, and withers the delicate spring colouring. By the beginning of May the grey hills and brown plains have assumed their summer aspect, dry and scorched, without a blade of green grass or a single blossom. In many districts the corn has already been reaped, and only the white stubble remains; while the thistles and thorns which sprout so rankly are shrivelled by the heat,

and form sometimes almost impassable obstacles.

About the middle of May the east wind—called *sherk* in Syria, and *khamshîn* in Egypt—begins to blow, generally for three days at a time. The wet-bulb thermometer often shows a difference of 22° with the dry-bulb during the prevalence of this wind; and the extreme dryness of the air is shown by the contraction of such substances, for instance, as vellum book-covers, which are often curled backwards, as if they had been placed before a hot fire.

The wind is not generally very strong, but blows in puffs or squalls, which strike the face like the heat from a furnace when its door is opened. Nor is it the heat and dryness alone which make the east wind so trying. It has been proved by careful experiments that, while it prevails, the air is almost entirely destitute of ozone. The ozone papers refuse to give even the least tinge of colour until the sea-breeze sets in again, when in less than half an hour they become dyed a deep purple.

The ozone—the most invigorating ingredient in the air—being absent, man and beast alike are stricken with a feeling of lassitude, and of incapacity for active exertion. When the east wind is strong, the sense of thirst is tormenting, as the lips and palate become parched. It is, however, extremely dangerous to imbibe large quantities of any liquid, as a kind of ulcerated sore throat is often the immediate result of excessive drinking. Animals are sometimes killed by the east wind, and cases of heat-apoplexy among the inhabitants of the plains are frequent.

With the month of May this trying season terminates; and although the heat is greater in June and July, these months are nevertheless as healthy as is any part of the year.

The west wind blows steadily, and the dew at night is accompanied by a refreshing coolness. Thus midsummer is by far the best period for any active outdoor operations, and might safely be recommended as the right time for moving troops, or for conducting field operations.

A peculiarity of the season is the occurrence almost every year of one heavy shower of rain in the early part of June, which does not, however, generally last for more than an hour or so.

In the month of August the maximum temperature is attained, and the east wind begins to blow again—occurring frequently also throughout September. The most remarkable feature of this season is the appearance of small whirlwinds, raising long columns of dust and chaff, and travelling slowly over the country. These whirlwinds often precede a change in the direction of the wind. They sometimes possess great force; and it is said that the sun-helmets of the English soldiers—to say nothing of the official papers of the officers—were often carried up to a great height in the sand-columns which swept through our camps. In the desolate regions south of Damascus, columns of great size may be seen from a long distance swirling slowly across the land; and by the natives they are believed to be the visible bodies of malignant demons prowling about the country. Their action is limited to a very small area, and it is possible to stand within a foot or two of the column without experiencing a breath of air, though the loud churning noise may be distinctly heard.

In September the sickly season begins, and in October cases of fever become frequent. The latter month is peculiarly dangerous, from the sudden alternations of temperature. The power of the sun on the

baking soil is still very great, but the wind is cool, and the nights in the hills are very cold. Chills are therefore very frequently caught, and result immediately in fever and ague. Dysentery is also common at this period; and the fruit-season being at its height, an additional source of sickness is found in greedy eating of grapes, melons, or prickly pears. It is to be feared that the temptations of the delicious fruit of the Levant will always be a source of much trouble to our military doctors, who will find it very hard to persuade the men to abstain from such a cheap and easily-obtained luxury. Even the natives of Syria are most imprudent in this respect, and severe visitations of fever have been traced to the eating of the prickly pears, which form hedges round many of the Syrian villages.

Early in October the autumn equinoctial gales visit the country, and generally prove much more violent than those of the spring. Torrents of rain fall for two or three days; and in a wet year settled weather cannot be expected for the rest of the autumn.

The extreme clearness of the air after the first rains is one of the most remarkable features of the autumn season. Distances appear to the eye to be suddenly halved, the most minute objects stand prominently out, and the profile of the hills is clearly cut against the sky. The face of the country is rapidly changed—the grass begins to give a faint tinge of green to the hill-slopes, and splendid masses of cumulus cloud are piled up on the horizon, giving a varied play of light and shade, which is truly charming to the eye tired with the monotonous glare of the cloudless summer sky. At this time the birds of passage appear in large flocks—lapwings and bustards, woodcocks and

quails; the lesser birds also gather round the springs, and the calling of the red-legged partridges is heard wherever cover can be found.

This season, which appears so charming and refreshing after the long summer, is, however, the most deadly and treacherous of all. The traveller who visits Syria after the first rains have fallen, cannot be too cautious. It is almost impossible at this time of year to sleep even for a night in the plains, without suffering from fever. The hills are the only safe part of the country; and even there it is important to keep in the driest parts, and to avoid the neighbourhood of water. The miasma from the reeking ground is drawn out by the sun's rays; and the damp soil is turned up by the plough as soon as the first showers have softened the baking ground. The fevers of the country increase in virulence throughout the month of November; and in some years it is stated that the population of villages in the plains is not only decimated, but even reduced by one half, so fatal is the malady among the peasantry.

As the heat decreases and the soil gets thoroughly soaked with rain, the climate gradually grows more healthy. In December and January the fever becomes less virulent, though many cases of simple ague occur, brought on by exposure and damp; for ague in the Levant takes the place of rheumatism or catarrh in the West.

In January and February snow falls frequently on the hills above a level of about 2000 feet. Hailstorms also often occur, and the rains during these months are very heavy. The ground is swamped by the water, and becomes impassable in the plains; bogs and quagmires are formed wherever the natural drainage is deficient, and the low-lying grounds are flooded.

In many of the valleys the corn is often entirely ruined by the absence of any system of irrigation; and the plentiful rainfall which, if properly stored, would suffice for the whole summer, becomes, in the present neglected condition of the country, only a curse to the land.

The rainy season continues until the vernal equinox, but the storms decrease in severity throughout February and March. In 1874, however, the whole of the hills of Palestine were white with snow in April. Seven heavy falls occurred in Jerusalem that year; and Mount Salmon, near Nablus, retained its white veil for many days. Easter falling early, the tourists at the Holy City experienced the unexpected and unpleasant surprise of sitting in their tents, in summer costume, amid the snow, at a season when mild and sunny weather was to be expected. Such a year is, however, exceptional in the Levant.

We have now traced the principal features of climatic change throughout the course of the year—from the healthy spring to the dry hot summer, the deadly autumn, and the cold winter. Our attention may next be directed to the common diseases of the country, and to their apparent causes.

The most usual diseases in the Levant are dysentery, fever, ophthalmia, and disorders of the liver and spleen. Dysentery is perhaps the most dangerous of all, and, as before stated, prevails commonly in the autumn. The native remedy is simple, consisting of lemon-juice squeezed into coffee, and is said to be sometimes very effective. The native dress, however, affords the best preventive; for the broad, thick shawl, worn round the loins by men and women alike, keeps the stomach warm, and prevents those chills which are one of the main causes of dysentery.

It may be remarked, with regard to the native costume, that however undesirable it might be for a dominant race to assume the dress of a nation which it governs, there are yet certain peculiarities of costume which originate in the requirements of climate, and which may be adopted with advantage. The waistband is not the only article of dress which recommends itself as being suitable to the climate. The flowing robes and loose white cloaks worn in summer are more effectual in keeping out the sun than are our own tight-fitting garments; and the native head-dresses deserve special mention as forming the best protection possible against sunstroke.

The stagnation of the blood, which produces sunstroke, may occur in any part of the body, and sometimes attacks the knees, when exposed with a tight-fitting covering, especially in riding. The nape of the neck is, however, the most dangerous spot, and all Eastern head-dresses cover it. In Morocco the natives will, however, face a fierce summer sun with only a grass fillet round their temples, the top of the head being exposed. This fillet is bound tightly, and passes over the base of the skull at the back. In the same way the Syrian head-dress, called *kufeyeh*, which is worn by Christians, by horsemen, by the Bedouin, and by the native regiments—in fact, by all who are most exposed to the sun—consists of a shawl bound round the temples by a fillet. A felt cap is often worn under the shawl, but the main object of the head-dress is to cover the nape of the neck, and to give a tight ligature round the head. The action of this fillet can only be properly accounted for by a physician. The fact remains, that it forms a most efficient protection against sunstroke. The sun-hel-

met worn by our troops does indeed shade the neck, but it does not bind the head. The adoption of the *kufeyeh* might prove a valuable precaution against the sun; and as a military dress, it has a very smart appearance when employed by the Turkish troops. The turban could hardly be adopted by Christians in the Levant, as the prejudices of Moslems, who regard it as a dress distinctive of the faithful, would be aroused. The *kufeyeh* possesses the additional recommendation, that it is already the Christian and military costume of the country.

Ophthalmia is a disease not peculiar to the Levant. In Egypt it is still more common, and in India our countrymen also suffer from it. In Syria the chalk districts are those where it prevails most, for the glare of the white rock is very trying to the sight. It is said that the use of *kohel* to the eyes is one of the best preservatives against this painful disease. Ophthalmia is unfortunately very catching, but care and cleanliness will do much to prevent its becoming dangerous, and the use of nitrate of silver in severe cases has a very salutary result.

Last, but not least, comes the question of fever, concerning which so much has latterly been said. The following remarks may perhaps prove of value, in pointing out the real causes of the disease, and the necessary remedies and precautions.

The Levantine fever is of two kinds, intermittent and remittent; but the cause appears to be the same in both cases—namely, an affection of the liver, due principally to bad water.

The intermittent fever or ague, though very weakening and trying, is not, as a rule, dangerous to life. It takes the place in the East of an influenza cold, and is generally brought on by overwork, chills,

over-exposure, worry, or any cause which lowers the natural energy. The poison may lie unsuspected in the system for months, and only show itself after removing to a healthy district. It is, however, generally acknowledged by the natives, that bad water is the original cause of the fever.

Ague commences with bad headache, hot and cold fits, and thirst. After a shorter or longer period, perspiration sets in, and the fever entirely disappears. The patient feels relieved, and, though weak, still quite well. It is then that rest and nourishment with quinine are required; for the fit is certain to return, and if no precautions have been taken, the violence of the fever in the second attack will increase.

The intermittent fever is easily treated, though it usually leaves behind an affection of the liver which may last for a lifetime. The patient is, however, always more subject to attacks than before.

There is a curious symptom which sometimes accompanies, and sometimes takes the place of, the fever. This is the ulcer known as *Habb el Halebîyeh*, "the Aleppo button;" also called *Habb es Senneh*, "the boil of a year," because it generally lasts for the best part of a year.

This curious ulcer is universally supposed to be the result of drinking unhealthy water.

The climate of Aleppo is cool—in fact, cold, for the orange-tree will not grow there; but still this plague is most frequent in that part of Syria. In the Lebanon also, it commonly appears, and throughout Syria cases occur. If the ulcer dries up, the patient gets fever. If it runs its course, he generally escapes. The "Aleppo button" appears, in fact, to be a natural outlet for the fever-poison from the system.

Fever, as above said, is ascribed to the drinking of certain springs;

and those sources which are supposed—or rather, which have by experience been proved—to be the most dangerous, are carefully avoided by the natives, although they are often clear and tempting, while the springs in use are perhaps muddy and brackish. A careful analysis of the water might perhaps throw light on the origin of the disease; meantime a fact reported from Cyprus tends to confirm the native belief, for it is stated that the only body of men who entirely escaped fever last year was a party supplied with water from the fleet.

Hitherto we have been considering the less dangerous intermittent fever; but the disease which attacked our troops in Cyprus was the more virulent remittent fever called *Safra* ("yellow"), which is accompanied with vomiting and typhoid symptoms. This malady requires far greater care and medical skill to combat it; for the opportunity for administering quinine, which occurs between the fits of the ague, does not arise in the remittent fever.

It appears to have been clearly shown that this fever is due to miasma, produced by the stagnation of water in the soil. Throughout Syria the driest districts are always the most healthy. The Sinaitic desert has a climate almost entirely free from fever, while the neighbourhood of the marshes is the most sickly part of the Syrian coast. In autumn a great deal of sickness is caused by ploughing, the miasma being thus enabled to escape from the ground, which is already made damp by the rains. In Cyprus, the necessary turning of the soil in the various camps may probably have increased the unhealthy condition of their neighbourhood.

It was proved in one instance, at Cyprus, that the fever was pro-

duced by the leakage of an aqueduct which formed a small marsh close to the camp of the Royal Artillery, who had at one time about fifty per cent of sick. The regiment next in order suffered less ; while a third regiment, at a greater distance from the water, was hardly affected at all.

The question of reclaiming the marshes on the mainland is, therefore, one of the greatest importance. In first dealing with the country, all those districts where miasma is to be feared should be most carefully avoided ; and this is not difficult, for the effects of the malaria seem to be restricted to within a very small distance of the marshes.

The swamps are of two kinds : first, those along the coast ; secondly, those inland. The latter are due to the existence of sinks without any natural outlet. These are very common in the Lebanon, and appear often to be volcanic craters. On the northern slopes of Hermon such a sink occurs ; and the whole of the little plain is every year suddenly flooded by water issuing from the foot of the hills. The lake subsides during the summer, and a pestilential marsh remains. To drain these sinks would be an engineering task of considerable difficulty, as they are generally quite surrounded with hills. The area is not, however, usually very large ; and the evil effect of the miasma, as before stated, is quite local.

The maritime marshes would perhaps be more easily treated ; for we may, in many cases, follow out the designs of the greatest engineering nation of antiquity, and treat the swamps as the Romans formerly treated them.

The most notoriously unhealthy place on the coast is the Bay of Iskanderûn, or Alexandretta, and there is no part of the shore which is so marshy. The remarks made

by Vice-Consul Barker, in his report in 1872, as to the Euphrates Valley Railway, which it is proposed should start from this fever-stricken port, are well worthy of attention.

The malignant character of the local fever he attributes to the stagnation of the air over the marshes. The high green hills of Mount Rhossus on the south, and the Alma Dagħ (Mount Amanus) on the north and east, shut out every breath of air. The temperature night and day varies only from 80° to 90° Fahr. ; and the miasma, sucked out of the marshes by the sun, hangs in the stagnant air, forming a mist in the morning and evening.

"I have known," he says, "in one month of August, eight English travellers who did not survive their having slept one or two nights in passing through Iskanderûn. . . . Some Europeans of peculiar constitution resist the first brunt of the fever, but only to keep it hanging about them until next summer carries them off. Very few can stand more than two years without being obliged to leave for change of air, which it is said, however, is more dangerous than remaining. . . . The fluctuating native population, principally indigenous, of Iskanderûn, resist the fever ; but they all have running sores in their legs, which dry up from time to time, and then the fever breaks forth afresh. The lungs of those born there resist the mortuary effect, but I have seen infants at the breast with open sores in their legs." It may be noted, in passing, that the ulcers thus described resemble the "Aleppo button" already noticed.

Were this the only disadvantage which Alexandretta possesses, if considered as the terminus of the railway of India, it could not but

be regarded in itself as a very great objection. When, however, we consider that the direct route through Aleppo leads to a healthy and safe port at the mouth of the Orontes, twenty-five miles south of Alexandretta; that this route to the harbour of Seleucia (Suweidîyeh) is shorter than that to Alexandretta; that it follows the course of the river, while that to Alexandretta first runs round the great swamp north of Antioch, and then crosses the difficult pass of Beilân (Pylæ Syriæ), 2000 feet high, —it seems curious that the more northern of the two termini should find any favour in the eyes of unprejudiced writers. In the one case we have a healthy harbour, in a charming situation at a river-mouth, in a plain dotted with gardens of mulberries and pomegranates, and a route ascending by easy gradients up a healthy valley; in the other we find a harbour rendered dangerous by the violence of the *raggiya* wind, blowing in winter in sudden squalls through the mountains, and a town lying among pestilent marshes—while the proposed line must either run, like a “fell” railway, over the pass, to descend again to an inland swamp, or will necessitate a tunnel scarcely less costly than that under Mont Cenis.

To return, however, to the question of the Alexandretta marshes. The swamps extend along the bay for 30 miles, and have an area of about 100 square miles. They occupy a flat plain between the high hills and the sand-dunes along the shore, and they are formed by the damming up of the water descending from the mountains, which sinks into the loamy soil behind the dunes. The maritime plains of the Syrian coast possess throughout the same character. The plains of Sharon and of Acre are, in the same

way, the result of the denudation of the hills, and of the heaping up of sand blown inland from the shores. At Acre and in Sharon, swamps are formed in the same manner, at a level very little above that of the sea, and they are annually flooded by the torrents from the hills.

The question of draining these marshes is not so easy as has sometimes been assumed. In the case of the plain of Sharon, it is perhaps less difficult, because the plain is wider, and the fall which can be obtained for the water is greater.

In this instance the Roman works still remain. The area of one of the Sharon swamps was restricted by a wall built from the hills to the shore, and carefully cemented inside. The bar of soft sandy rock was then cut through in various places, and the streams which now form the swamps were allowed to drain into the sea. These works have become ruined, the channels have been filled up, and the marshes have re-formed.

At Alexandretta, however, the difficulty is greater. The hills approach within four miles of the shore; they are steep and lofty, and cut up with many water-courses. The marsh is nearly on a level with the sea; and, in fact, it is said by one writer to be below sea-level. Were this the case, we might hope to let the sea in and destroy the marsh; but it seems probable that the real level is above that of the sea.

It must be remembered that we should have to provide, not only for draining the existing marsh, but for carrying away the water from the hills as it descends every winter, —and this supposes very extensive irrigatory works.

An engineer who has already written on the question appears to have lost sight of this fact. He proposes to drive iron pipes through

the great sand-dunes, and so tap the water within, the pipes being "raised considerably above the sandy bottom" of the sea, into which they discharge.

The very gradual slope of the shore and the low level of the marshes would, however, render such drainage almost impossible; and the tubes would probably be destroyed by the violent storms which have already formed the dunes, and which sometimes completely alter the soundings of the sea-bottom near shore in a single night.

The evil must be tapped at the root. The cultivation of the hills, and the utilisation of the water now allowed to run to waste down the valleys, would render it in time far easier to deal with the marsh; but in the meanwhile, many valuable lives might be sacrificed in the attempt to render the neighbourhood of Alexandretta healthy, and sacrificed to very little purpose—for the port, as above noticed, is not the natural terminus for the Euphrates Valley Railway, which should follow the valley of the Orontes, to the Bay of Seleucia, on the other side of Mount Rhossus.

The peculiar malignity of the fever at Alexandretta is attributed to the stagnation of the air. The sea-breeze, which forms one of the most attractive features of Syrian climate, is never felt there. The importance of obtaining a free access of wholesome air cannot be over-estimated. Even the neighbourhood of marshes is less dangerous when the sea-breeze blows away the miasma. The villages in Syria are perched on heights which catch the least breath of air, and are thus rendered not only cooler but more healthy. In the choice of camps, the greatest care should be taken to select spots thus open to the wind.

The preceding description of Levantine climate would be of little value by itself; it is because a true idea of the climate may lead to the suggestion of precautions necessary to be observed, and of improvements which may gradually be made, that the results of experience are useful. We may therefore now briefly consider the rules which should be observed by those whose lot is cast at any time in Cyprus or Syria.

The first and most important precaution is to keep dry. The healthiness of any district in the Levant has been shown to be proportionate to its dryness. The tempting neighbourhood of streams, and gardens irrigated by open channels of water, are to be carefully avoided, and open ground at some distance from any spring should be selected. It seems also that it is not safe to conduct water to a camp through pipes, or by an aqueduct, unless it can be so arranged that no overflow or pool of stagnant water can by any chance be formed. It would be far safer to organise a service of mules or donkeys to bring in the water in earthen jars from some little distance.

The danger of camping near water is perfectly well understood by the Bedouin, whose tents are never placed close to the springs. The Arab women bring water into camp, sometimes from a distance of over a mile, either on donkeys, or often in goat-skins on their own backs. The reason given by the Arabs is, that fever is to be feared near the springs.

The extreme dryness of the Syrian climate is an advantage of which the most should be made. Sanitary arrangements are much facilitated thereby; and cities exist in the Levant without drains, because of the power of the sun in burning up offensive matter. The presence of stagnant water counteracts this ad-

vantage, and will at once convert a healthy camp into a fever centre.

The second precaution concerns the choice and use of water. A source having been selected which is not condemned by the natives, a second safeguard may be obtained by distilling the water before use. Filtering does not appear to have the required effect, and the pocket-filter (such as was supplied to our troops in Ashantee) is at best but a clever toy, not likely to be used by a man whose thirst is scarcely appeased by a bucketful. It must be put beyond the soldier's power, as far as possible, to drink bad water. Boiling has a good effect, but distillation has been found to be a perfectly successful cure for infected water. It is true that the taste of distilled water is flat, but this can be remedied in many ways; and the use of barley or rice in the water (as drunk by the smiths in our arsenals) is to be recommended, as tending to allay the thirst after drinking a lesser quantity. Lemonade and cold tea are also valuable beverages for preserving the healthy condition of the liver, and thus preventing fever. Generally speaking, the less that a man drinks the better he will be. The soldier who is constantly drinking in the heat of the day will soon fall ill; and the man who persists in drinking spirits or beer, and who is at the same time exposed to the heat of the sun, has but a short time to live in the Levant.

It is said that whitewashing the interiors of vessels in which the water is distilled corrects the flatness of taste. The experiment could easily be tried, and in permanent quarters there should be very little difficulty in supplying wholesome water to the troops. This precaution alone would probably make a marked difference in the healthiness of the various stations.

The third requisite for camps is an exposure to the western breeze.

Stations chosen in sheltered positions will never be healthy in summer; and it would be preferable to stand the full force of the winter storms, rather than to choose a locality where the air stagnates as it does at Alexandretta.

The fourth precaution, and one of no little importance, is, that none of the men should be allowed to sleep on or close to the ground. The miasma creeps along the surface, and it is said that a difference of six inches in level will sometimes make the difference between health and disease. It is not difficult to make the proper arrangements. In tents, the hammocks may be suspended from the poles; in huts, the beds can be erected, like berths in a ship, against the walls. But even if it necessitated more cumbrous arrangements, it is of the utmost importance that the men should sleep at least a foot from the ground, and that the tents should be provided with ground-sheets.

The fifth precaution concerns the dress of the men. In Cyprus, cholera-belts were ordered to be worn; but the article so called is one of the most unsatisfactory productions in existence. It is a belt of flannel, buttoned over the abdomen. The buttons are always coming off, and the flannel shrinks so as to make the belt quite useless. A simple roll of flannel is better, and the native shawl is still more effective. The Turkish troops wear a uniform waistcoat, with an open jacket, and a broad red sash wound round beneath the jacket. Such a costume has a comfortable and by no means unmilitary appearance; and when, in addition, the *kufeyeh* is worn on the head, the soldier may be said to possess a costume suitable to the climate, and securing the best chances of health for the wearer.

The sixth point regards the food of the troops. It will always be difficult to prevent the men from over-eating and over-drinking. The toughness of the peasant constitution in the Levant is due to the abstemiousness of the natives. They drink only coffee, lemonade, and water; they live almost entirely on vegetables and oil. The constitution of Englishmen requires a meat diet, and it would be impossible to imitate the natives altogether. A large quantity of vegetable food is, however, a requisite for health; and such a vegetable as the tomato is the best diet for preserving the healthy action of the liver. Onions are also said to be preservatives against fever; and fruit eaten in moderation at maturity is also wholesome, though the sweet melons and the prickly pears are considered very injurious by the natives.

The seventh and last precaution which should be observed when possible is, that the reliefs should reach the country in spring, and that the troops withdrawn should be sent to a healthy and temperate climate. The men arriving in spring will have at least four healthy months in which to become acclimatised and acquainted with the habits necessitated by the country. They will thus be better fitted to undergo the trials of the unhealthy autumn; and the increase of temperature, which has been shown to be regular from January to September, will come on them gradually. The troops retired should not be sent to any of our Mediterranean stations, where heat and fever would be again encountered, nor should they be quartered in a very cold country. Many will have brought away the fever-poison in their systems, and sudden chills in a bracing climate will inevitably result in the reappearance of the

Levantine disease. Many officers have suffered more since leaving Cyprus than they ever did in the island; and, as above stated, the same return of fever is equally dreaded by those who leave Alexandretta.

By observing the above precautions, the health of troops or residents in the Levant might be preserved to a very great extent without any radical alteration in the climate itself. With time, however, improvements might be introduced which would affect the salubrity of the country. Changes must have occurred for the worse in the climate of Palestine, or the ancient historian would not have described the plains of Jericho—now pestilent in autumn from the stagnant water—as a region “fit for the gods.” In the time of Josephus these plains were carefully cultivated, and the water from the springs was carried away in aqueducts to irrigate the palm groves. The palms disappeared about the twelfth century, and the climate began probably to be unhealthy from that period.

The first requisite for the country is the construction of roads. If our troops in Cyprus could have been quartered on the slopes of Olympus, at a height of 3000 or 4000 feet above the sea, we should perhaps have heard little of sickness among them. It would, however, have been impracticable, in the present condition of Cyprus, to feed them at such a distance from the coast. Good roads, and the introduction of wheeled transport, would facilitate the communications from the mountains to the sea, and make it possible to quarter the troops in stations far more healthy than the plains of Larnaka. In Syria, too, the country would also require to be opened up; and the stations which would prove most healthy are on Lebanon or the mountains

of Galilee, 4000 feet or more above the sea. Roads are the first requisites for the improvement of the country from a sanitary point of view.

The next public works would be connected with irrigation. The swamps must be drained, the water now running to waste must be used for cultivation, and the plentiful rainfall would give a supply of water which, if stored, would be sufficient to preclude any danger of drought.

The soil of the hills is now annually washed down in large quantities to the plains, and the old system of terracing has been allowed to fall into ruin. Cultivation once re-established in the mountains, and the rain now pouring off the rocky slopes being utilised for irrigation or collected in cisterns, the flooding of the plains would be to a great extent prevented, and their drainage might be more easily effected. The climate would thus be materially improved, by the carrying off of water now allowed to stagnate.

The old system of water-storage, now neglected, might very easily be renewed: magnificent cisterns cut in rock, or formed like the Indian tanks by damming up the mouths of valleys, exist in every part of the country. These cisterns should be cleared of the rubbish now choking them, and should be re-cemented inside. They might then hold as much water as would at first be required.

Fine aqueducts are found in every part of Syria, and, like the cisterns and reservoirs, have been allowed to fall into ruins. At a trifling expense these works, which appear generally to have been engineered by the Romans, might also be restored.

The draining of the marshes would be another step in advance,

and would materially improve the climate. When Ibrahim Pasha, the Egyptian, was in possession of Alexandretta, he commenced the work of drainage in its pestilent swamp. The system which he employed was imperfect, but a marked improvement in the healthiness of the place was the immediate result. The canal which he constructed has been allowed by the Turks to become choked, and is now useless. This was, however, a good instance of the improvements which might be effected, even in a short period, by an energetic Government.

The last question connected with the improvement of the climate is that of planting trees. Much is expected to result in Cyprus from this change; but the alteration effected would only be very gradual, and it would be many years before a visible change would be made.

It is very usual, in speaking of Syria, to assume that a great alteration has occurred in the amount of forest-growth. We have not, however, any very good authority for such a supposition. The depth of the soil on the mountains may perhaps at one time have been greater, but even the most rocky hills are still covered with dense thickets, and woods of small oaks. On Lebanon there are still forests of cedar, as yet scarcely visited by the traveller, and pine-woods cover Mount Rhossus, while oaks abound in Lower Galilee. The country has nevertheless, to the eye, a barren and desolate appearance, from the constant outcrop of bare rock; and in the districts where the white porous chalk allows the water to sink down to the lower strata, forests probably never have existed, and never will exist.

The trees of the country are oak, terebinth, olive, and fig: beside the rivers in Northern Syria the poplar

flourishes in thick groves. The mastic forms a dense copse, covering the lower hills, and some species of oaks also grow as low bushes. Palms are found principally along the coast, where frost is not to be feared, and where they find the conjunction of sand and fresh water in which they flourish best.

It is evident, therefore, that a great amount of vegetation already exists, and the first requisite is the enactment and strict enforcement of forest laws. This step has already been taken in Cyprus by Sir Garnet Wolseley, and may prove all that is required to restore the natural growth of the island. Coal being rare and costly in the Levant, the unprotected forests have been in some cases quite destroyed, by indiscriminate felling of the trees for fuel. The most wanton waste is also made: trees are mutilated or burnt down; the roots are chopped from the living trunk, or the branches are broken off. It would, however, be necessary at first to allow a certain amount of felling, under proper regulations; for unless coal-mines were opened—which does not seem very probable, as the geological formations of the country belong to the cretaceous epoch—the winter supply of fuel must still be derived from the woods.

The question of introducing trees not indigenous to the country is one which requires experiments to settle. The choice of such trees must be carefully made, but there can be no doubt that the climate of a country is rapidly affected by the increase of vegetation. To this fact the island of Jamaica bears witness; for the rapid spread of the mango—which is not indigenous—has in less than a century greatly changed the character of the climate. The leaves of trees, especially of those which grow rapidly, consume the miasma from the air; and the

growth of the blue gum-tree (*Eucalyptus globulus*), which is so amazingly rapid, is said materially to improve the climate of any country where malaria exists.

The recent project for reclaiming the Maremma, near Rome, by planting this tree, shows the esteem in which it is held by many authorities. It is, however, not suited for any district where frost occurs, though it might possibly flourish in the Levantine plains. Almost any tree which grows as quickly as the *Eucalyptus* will produce similar changes; and it is even said that the sun-flower is a preservative against fever if grown in gardens round a house.

It must not, however, be forgotten that the growth of trees renders the climate damper, that dry heat is more easily borne than damp heat, and that the healthiness of districts in the Levant is proportionate to their dryness. It may then, perhaps, be still considered an open question whether the salubrity of the climate would be increased by an increase in the wooding.

What then, we may ask, in concluding this paper, is the general result of our inquiry? It appears to be this: that the unhealthiness of the climate has been over-estimated, and that Cyprus, far from being the fever-den which our Radical anti-patriots would make it appear, is probably not more unhealthy at the worst than Malta or Gibraltar. The visitation of sickness from which our men suffered was due to a great extent to their own ignorance of the climate and of the necessary precautions to be observed, and also to the necessity of quartering them in the unhealthy plains during the most sickly and trying season of the year.

It appears, further, that the Levantine climate possesses three great

advantages over that of many of our foreign stations. First, the cool west breeze blowing from the sea; secondly, the dewy and refreshing nights; thirdly, the natural dryness of the climate. It appears, further, that this climate is capable of improvement, by the effect produced by irrigation works, and probably also by the encouragement of the natural vegetation, and the introduction of trees suited to the country.

Meantime the precautions which should be observed by those visiting the Levant are, to avoid the marshy districts, to be very careful as to the water drunk, and to adopt a costume suitable to the season and country. All these points were neglected by those who first visited Cyprus, and the natural result was a severe visitation of fever.

Such, impartially stated, is probably the truth regarding what has so unjustly been termed the "Cyprus fiasco." Our troops were sent out totally without experience, at a

trying season, to hold a country which may prove one of our most important possessions, from a political point of view. They suffered and gained experience for the benefit of those who may follow them. It is idle to judge of the Cyprian climate from the experience of the past year, except in so far as we then became acquainted with its worst features; and it is unjust to cry down one of the most important successes of our Eastern policy, because two English regiments were severe sufferers in carrying out the duty of first occupying the island. Time and experience will work wonders in the improvement of Cyprus; and it will surely never be said that England, who has spread her colonies over the whole world, has penetrated the Indian jungle and the African swamps, finds herself unable to cope with the difficulties and annoyances of the Levantine climate, or with the unhealthy autumn in the plains of Larnaka.

ODILLON BARROT IN 1848.

[In preparing to review* that portion of Mr Senior's 'Conversations' which bore (by anticipation) upon the troubles of the British and Ottoman empires, we found ourselves arrested in the performance of our duty towards the East by an irresistible temptation to listen to M. Thiers whilst describing the part he took during several critical hours in the throes of the "July monarchy." In vain we reminded our solemn selves that we must get on with our task, and that the exit of poor Louis Philippe in the February of 1848 had nothing on earth to do with the Balkan Peninsula. There was a fascination in the account Thiers gave us of his previous mental attitude; his mandate to the Tuileries; his perils; his goings and comings in the midst of the barricades; his demeanour and counsels to the bewildered king; his recognition of the sound of the women—queen and all—in the adjoining room; his transformation from only a statesman to a commander preparing for battle; his words to General Bugeaud; his sudden Napoleonic

* See "Foreign Opinion on England in the East," *Maga*, vol. cxxiii., p. 734, June 1878.

inquiry, asking how many rounds of cartridges the monarchy could command in this its hour of trial; the appalling answer he received; his resolute measures; and then "the rising, rising tide;"—so that never did our interest cease, nor even indeed our alarm, till we saw the narrator safe home.

But the record of what Thiers said had a separate hold upon the reader's attention; for, interspersed with his narrative, he mingled some fine, subtle criticism upon the other Prime Minister of the night-time—that is, upon Odillon Barrot; and, upon the whole, it seemed to us that, considering who the narrator was, and how cardinal were those eventful hours, the Publishers of Mr Senior's 'Conversations' had a gem, unique of its kind, which could never be perfectly matched.

But Fortune—the Fortune of Maga—comes to chide us for distrusting her power to find an historic gem that shall rival the one left by Thiers; and now brings us, from the desk of Mr Senior, this new treasure-trove—a narrative of the same pregnant hours, and furnished by him whom we called "the other Prime Minister of the night-time"—that is, by Odillon Barrot himself. Nor is even this all we gain; for—as though to enforce a fair weighing in those eternal scales which Justice holds up for our use—the keen, searching criticism of Odillon Barrot by Thiers, is reciprocated by a no less keen and no less searching criticism of Thiers by Odillon Barrot. The only disagreement between the two stories is that Thiers says that it was by Bugeaud that he was prevented from accompanying Barrot in his expedition to the barricades.

Mrs Simpson, Mr Senior's daughter, writes to us: "After our visit to Val Richer in 1860, my father and I spent a few days with M. Duvergier de Hauranne, at his chateau of Héry, near Bourges. A very distinguished circle was assembled there; and among the many interesting conversations which are recorded in Mr Senior's unpublished journal, I have selected the following account, by Odillon Barrot, of his share in the events of February 1848."—Ed.]

EXTRACT FROM MR SENIOR'S JOURNAL.

HÉRY, *Sept.* 23, 1860.

We had a large dinner-party: among them, M. and Madame Benoît d'Azy. She is one of the few very handsome women whom I have seen in France. It was the first fine warm evening since we reached Héry.

After coffee, Odillon Barrot, who is an habitual smoker, took me into the veranda, and spent an hour and a half and three cigars in relating to me his share in the events of the 24th of February.

Barrot. After the king, while submitting to reform, had refused us a dissolution, and retreated from his Cabinet into the room containing his unofficial advisers, shutting the door in Thiers's face, we thought it necessary to send to the barricades to announce the creation of a reforming ministry.

I offered to go, and Thiers wished to go with me.

Senior. It was a service of danger. Had he nerve enough for it?

Barrot. Sometimes in moments of great danger *il se trouble*. His vivid imagination presents to him too many objects at once. He does not know which to select as principally to be pursued, or principally to be avoided. He sees too much. Duller men see only one thing at a time, and are calm. This has made his courage doubted. But what he wants is not courage, but rapid decision. He is morally brave. He is always ready to expose himself to danger, if he thinks that the objects to be attained are worth the risk.

In this case, I thought that, as far as he was concerned, they were not, so I begged him to remain in the chateau.

We were joined, as we went out, by Horace Vernet, in his uniform as colonel of a regiment of National Guards.

At the first barricade, which was in the Rue de l'Échelle, we were well received. I told them that Thiers and I were ministers, that reform was granted, and that the barricades were now useless. They cried "*Vive Barrot! Vive la Réforme!*" and pulled down the barricades. So it was till we got to the Boulevards. There the people were less satisfied; they cried out, "*On te trompe, Barrot! On te trompe! Il n'y aura pas de réforme avec Bugeaud!*" Still they quitted the barricades. Further on we met some of the troops. The people had got among them, had given them wine, and in some cases had got hold of their arms. Further still, we met the *fourgons* of the artillery, which had been sent with ammunition from Vincennes, and were now being plundered by the mob, while the troops looked on, and the officers turned away their heads. Further still, a little beyond the Porte St Denys, we found an enormous barricade, crossing the whole Boulevard. The men

behind it were silent. I told them my story. I read to them the manifesto which we had drawn up, and I begged them to pull down the barricade.

They would not answer me.

I did not think it advisable to leave them in my rear, so I turned back. I was too exhausted to walk. Some of the mob put me on a horse and supported me. As I returned along the Boulevards, the barricades were all down, the only cry was "*Vive la Réforme!*" There was no anarchical or even republican manifestation. As we reached the Place de la Madeleine, there was a sudden cry, "*Aux Tuileries! Aux Tuileries!*" I wish to God that I had gone with them. The mob that surrounded me was monarchical. They wished only for reform, and they had got it. They would have filled all the avenues to the chateau and to the Palais Bourbon, and have prevented the subsequent attacks on each. But I undervalued the danger. The members of the secret societies, the Rouges, had not yet shown themselves. I did not suspect that they were ready, and that within an hour they would rush from their ambuscade. When I recollected what were the terms on which I had parted from the king, the words, "You shall have no dissolution," still ringing in my ears, it seemed to me that if, two hours afterwards, I returned to him at the head of 100,000 *émeutiers*—and there were not less in my suite—I should return rather as a revolutionary dictator than as a constitutional minister. So I explained to my followers that I was really too exhausted to remain with them any longer, that they must lead my horse to my house in the Rue la Ferme des Mathurins, and let me get half an hour's rest. They took me home, carried me up-stairs, and laid me on a bed. But in a few minutes messengers came from

the Hotel of the Interior to say that my presence was necessary there to dictate the telegrams which were to be sent to the provinces. They were known to be in great excitement, and it was feared that armed bodies might march on Paris, if they were not stopped by news of the appointment of a reforming ministry. I went thither in my carriage, for I could not walk or ride. The Pont de la Concorde was filled by a dense mass, which opened to let me through, with cries of "*Vive Barrot! Vive la Réforme!*"

I spent about half an hour dictating messages, and then proceeded to join my colleagues at the Tuileries. I tried to get into the Carrousel under the arch, but instead of the troops whom I had left there, it was filled by a mob, and I saw the rear of the soldiers marching out under the Tour de l'Horloge.

Then I was told the news. That the king had named me President of the Council; that he had abdicated, having appointed the Duchess of Orleans regent; that she had been sending everywhere in search of me, and that I should find her in her pavilion, at the end of the Terrace du Bord de l'Eau. It was a sort of summer-house, built for her by the king, on the spot now occupied by the Orangery. I went thither as fast as the crowd would permit me, and searched it all over in vain. This lost me twenty minutes. At last I was told that she was gone to the Chamber of Deputies.

I followed her thither, and as

I was entering I was pulled aside by some of the revolutionary party, who told me that a provisional government was to be proposed, and urged me to be its president.

I refused, of course, with the utmost indignation, and found the Duchess,* pale but composed, with her sons and her brother-in-law, the Duc de Nemours, sitting at the foot of the Tribune. A mob had entered the Chamber, but seemed rather curious than revolutionary.

M. Dupin had announced the abdication, and the regency of the Duchess.

M. Marie had objected that by law the regency belonged to the Duc de Nemours, and proposed a provisional government, under whose direction the question as to the person of the regent should be settled.

I said a few words, in which I assumed the regency of the Duchess, and asked the support of the Chamber to a Liberal ministry.

She herself rose once or twice to speak, but was very unwisely and very unfortunately held down by those around her.

At length Lamartine got into the Tribune. I had no doubt that he would move the immediate recognition of the Duchess as regent, and that I should be able to accompany her to the Hôtel de Ville.†

To my astonishment, and to that of the Assembly, he declared that the days of monarchy were over; that a solid basis of government must be sought in the lowest depths of society; and that a pro-

* If either Thiers or Barrot had been told beforehand that the Duchess was proceeding to the Chambers, the whole course of history might have been altered, as they would have accompanied and supported her (see '*Conversations*,' p. 20).—M. C. M. S.

† In a letter to Mr Senior, published in the Journals kept in France and Italy, vol. i. p. 214, M. de Tocqueville says: "Even on the 24th February the monarchy might have been saved by the proclamation of the provisional government, and if the retreat of the Duchess could have been retarded an hour." M. de Tocqueville expresses in the same letter his astonishment at Lamartine's behaviour.—M. C. M. S.

visional government must be formed, to act until the people had expressed its will.

A different mob—the mob of the secret societies, armed and furious from the sack of the Tuileries—now rushed into the Chamber.

It yelled out its acceptance of Lamartine's proposal. The Duchess and her party were forced to leave the Chamber. Larochejaquelin, with the perverse folly of a true Legitimist, cried out, that as the people had declared its will, the powers of the Chamber were at an end. The deputies, some frightened, some astounded, broke up.

The provisional government was proclaimed from the Tribune, and enthroned itself in the Hôtel de Ville.

I accompanied the Duchess to the Invalides.

"How unfortunate it is," I said to her, "that I did not find you in the pavilion! If we had reached the Chamber half an hour sooner, you would have been proclaimed as regent before the revolutionary mob arrived, and carried to the Hôtel de Ville."

"Alas!" she answered, "I was sitting quietly in my own apartment. Nobody came to me, nobody advised me, until I was told to go to the Chamber."

We, the friends of reform, have been accused of creating the Revolution of 1848. It was created by the enemies of reform.

They taunted us with the absence of any popular demonstration

in favour of it. The reform banquets were our answer to that taunt. At every banquet which I attended, and I presided at twenty or thirty, I required that the first toast should be the King, and the second the Constitution. When we found that the minds of the people were becoming dangerously excited, we gave them up.

The king rubbed his hands, and said to Duchatel, "I always told you that this agitation would come to nothing."

He ought to have known that a great party does not abandon a powerful political engine without good reason. He ought to have known that our sudden furling of our sails was a proof that we felt the approach of a storm.

Senior. Guizot thinks that on the 24th of February the king lost his head.

Barrot. It is true. A man who has lived for years in a dark room, who has systematically prevented any light from penetrating to him, is dazzled as soon as his shutters are broken open. He chose to say that his *pays légal* was France. He allowed no one to suggest to him any doubts as to the safety of a system which consisted in the purchase by the deputies of a majority of the electors, and in the purchase by the king of a majority of the deputies.

When that system broke in his hands, he was a magician deprived of his wand.

N. W. SENIOR.

THE TWO LIGHTS.

*“ ‘ When I’m a man ! ’ is the poetry of youth. ‘ When I was young ! ’
is the poetry of old age.”*

“ WHEN I’m a man,” the stripling cries,
And strives the coming years to scan—
“ Ah, then I shall be strong and wise,
When I’m a man ! ”

“ When I was young,” the old man sighs,
“ Bravely the lark and linnet sung
Their carol under sunny skies,
When I was young ! ”

“ When I’m a man, I shall be free
To guard the right, the truth uphold.”
“ When I was young I bent no knee
To power or gold.”

“ Then shall I satisfy my soul
With yonder prize, when I’m a man.”
“ Too late I found how vain the goal
To which I ran.”

“ When I’m a man these idle toys
Aside for ever shall be flung.”
“ There was no poison in my joys
When I was young.”

The boy’s bright dream is all before,
The man’s romance lies far behind.
Had we the present and no more,
Fate were unkind.

But, brother, toiling in the night,
Still count yourself not all unblest
If in the east there gleams a light,
Or in the west.

BITTER-SWEET.

I am building o'er buried pleasures
A cairn that shall mark their bed ;
I am telling the tale of treasures
That have turned from fine gold to lead ;
I am tuning my lute to measures—
Dear measures !—whose soul is fled.
Bitter-sweet in the sad December
The remembrance of May, Juliette !
Say, love, do you dare to remember ?
Sweet love, can you bear to forget ?

I am straying by sullen rivers
That prattle no more of spring—
By glades where no sunbeam quivers—
In woods where no linnets sing,
But only the cypress shivers,
Brushed by the night-bird's wing.
And yet would I fain remember
That once it was May, Juliette !
Not even the sad December
Can force us to quite forget.

O'er this cairn shall I cease to ponder,
And scatter it stone from stone ?
Shall I break, ere I grow yet fonder,
This lute with its mocking tone ?
And shall I no longer wander
In woods whence the birds are flown ?
Ah ! bitter-sweet in December
The remembrance of May, Juliette !
Say, love, do you dare to remember ?
Sweet love, can you bear to forget ?

AMARI ALIQUID.

If ever at the fount of joy
Poor mortal stoops to fill his cup,
Still welling fresh to his annoy
A bitter something bubbles up.
So one sang sadly long ago—
Sang how the fairest flowers amid,
E'en where the springs of pleasure flow,
"Surgit amari aliquid."

And echoing down the vaults of time
The warning sounds for me and you
In Latin verse, in English rhyme:
'Twas true of old, to-day 'tis true.
Ah, brother! have you not full oft
Found, even as the Roman did,
That in life's most delicious draught
"Surgit amari aliquid"?

You run the race, the battle fight,
And, eager, seize at last the prize:
The nectar in its goblet bright
Is yours to drain 'neath beauty's eyes.
Yet are these honours out of date—
They would not come when they were bid:
The longed-for draught is all too late—
"Surgit amari aliquid."

Or, haply, in the cruel strife
You foully thrust a brother down,
And with his broken heart, or life,
Purchased your bauble of a crown.
Wear it; but of remorseful thought
In vain you struggle to be rid.
The triumph is too dearly bought—
"Surgit amari aliquid."

And so the cup is turned to gall,
The fount polluted at its source—
Envenomed and embittered all
By dull regret or keen remorse.
Well hast thou said, O godless sage!
From thee not *all* the truth was hid,
Though ever on thy mighty page
"Surgit amari aliquid."

THE ZULU WAR.

THE success, exceeding our most sanguine expectations, which has attended our arms in Asia, has been cruelly dashed by a serious catastrophe to our troops in South Africa. A large body of soldiers, numbering nearly six hundred officers and men, has been completely annihilated, almost before a blow had been struck on our side, and before we were even able to realise that hostilities had actually begun. Scarcely less than the national sorrow for the loss of our brave soldiers is the feeling of regret that the colours of one of her Majesty's regiments should have fallen into the hands of the enemy. Seldom have British susceptibilities sustained such a shock. We must go back to the days of the first Affghan war for any parallel to the feelings which this disaster has inspired in the country; and even then we doubt whether our *prestige* was felt to have suffered such an indignity as it has now sustained at the hands of a horde of savages. In the face of such a calamity, party feelings can have no place. Between Liberal and Conservative there can be no difference of opinion as to the urgent necessity for now pushing this Zulu war to a speedy end. Exemplary punishment for the king who has dared to defy British power, to break the peace of South Africa, and to drag his wretched vassals into a contest where they must necessarily be the losers, is an object that supersedes all other considerations. When our soldiers have retrieved their recent misfortune, it will be quite time to wrangle over the political objects of the expedition, and the means to be adopted for pacifying the Zulu country. We must

postpone to the same event the very desirable inquiries that will doubtless be made into the unaccountable way in which the troops had been surrounded and decoyed from their position. All these and other subjects will claim attention in due course. At present we can have no thought and no desire but how most speedily and effectually we can avenge the slaughter of our countrymen.

For more than two years now, amid the disturbance of Eastern Europe and the dangers threatening our empire in Asia, we have been conscious of coming troubles in our South African colonies. The fact that trouble is a chronic condition of these possessions, that one native difficulty is no sooner settled than another comes up for disposal, and that more or less fighting is always going on along our various African frontiers, has not on this occasion prevented us from seeing that a difficulty of more than usual magnitude was confronting her Majesty's High Commissioner at the Cape. All through the past year we have had unmistakable warnings of a coming collision with the Zulu kingdom, and ample proof that the commencement of hostilities was merely a matter of time, and we may say of convenience, to both sides. We knew enough of the Zulu character, and of the disposition of the Zulu king, to be aware that no pacific counsels would allay the war-fever which had seized on Cetuyayo and his followers. We knew of how little avail it is to urge prudential considerations on savages, who do not count the cost, in comparison with the gratification of their tribal pride, or their desire to distinguish themselves in

war. And we knew beyond all question that Cetywayo would have war with some one, and at all hazards, whatever force he engaged, or upon whatever quarrel he fought.

On our own side we have been clearly sensible that the military power of the Zulu nation was rapidly becoming dangerous to the colonists, as well as obstructive to the consolidation of our South African interests. In Natal on the one side, and in our new territory the Transvaal on the other, the strength of the Zulu king was a standing menace to progress and prosperity. What good was there in opening up farms, in building houses, or in buying herds, with a not remote prospect of Cetywayo sweeping across the country like a destroying angel, burning, slaying, and pillaging wherever he went? How was capital to be invested, enterprise to be encouraged, with such a cause of terror constantly in the background? Writing in the columns of this magazine in the summer of last year,* a distinguished British officer, who had had unusual opportunities of personally acquainting himself with this subject, spoke of the Zulu frontier as "that mine which may at any moment be sprung, bringing ruin and devastation to all within its reach." For the last eighteen months Sir Bartle Frere, her Majesty's High Commissioner in South Africa, has been face to face with this difficulty, and no exercise of human ingenuity could have devised an escape that would be at once peaceful and productive of permanent security. We have recently seen how difficult it is to exert a pacific influence over Powers with more pretensions to civilisation when blood is up and arms in the hand, to be very sanguine about

the success of diplomatic negotiations with such a sovereign as Cetywayo. With the Zulu savage no arguments have force save those that are backed up by a pistol; and we can never have any security against his nation until it has tried its strength with the British power, and has learned such a lesson in the contest as will serve to impress it with the advantages of peace for the present generation. And it will be the fault of our Government if the Zulu power should ever be allowed to reconstruct itself so as to cause anxiety to our colonists, or to necessitate further expenditure of British men or money to keep it within safe bounds.

To break the military power of the Zulu nation, to save our colonists from apprehensions which have been paralysing all efforts at advancement, and to transform the Zulus from the slaves of a despot who has shown himself both tyrannical and cruel, and as reckless of the lives as of the rights of his subjects, to a law-protected and a law-abiding people, is the task which has devolved upon us in South Africa, and to perform which our troops have now crossed the Tugela. This, broadly speaking, is the cause and object of the war. There are, of course, a number of events which have served as stepping-stones for the two parties taking up their present position; but we hold these to be of but secondary consequence compared with the evident antagonism which was bound to find some outlet sooner or later on Cetywayo's side. On our part, the main point to be secured was, that the collision with the Zulus should take place at a time when we should be in a position to strike with effect, and with such a force as would reduce to a minimum the miseries which

* "The South African Question." *Maga*, vol. cxxiv. (July 1878).

the Zulus would necessarily suffer in the struggle. This Sir Bartle Frere seems to have thought that he had provided for. He and Lord Chelmsford got together on the Zulu frontier such an army as, in the expectation of all the colonial authorities, was sufficient to speedily reduce the Zulu country. It was looked upon as a fortunate circumstance that the war should be undertaken at a time when the attention of her Majesty's Government was less distracted than it had been for some time back by more pressing anxieties nearer home. And though the first step has proved a false one, we cannot permit ourselves to doubt that we shall speedily effect the settlement of what has been the most serious difficulty of South African administration, and that with the subjection of the Zulus, and the submission of Secocoeni, which has also to be secured, we shall have placed the native question upon a firmer basis, and reached the end of those little wars, which so unsettle the minds of our colonists, impede their prosperity, and burden the revenues of the mother country with expenses, from which at best we only derive benefit at second-hand.

The ostensible causes of quarrel with Cetywayo, though of secondary importance to the issues which we have indicated above, are still of sufficient interest, both as indicating the justice of our present course of action, and as showing how essential it is for the colonial population to be freed from the ever-increasing danger of a Zulu outbreak, to deserve brief recapitulation. We need not go into the general details of South African native policy, which not many months ago were explained with great minuteness in the columns of this magazine.* We shall confine

ourselves on the present occasion to the Zulu question and to those issues which more immediately spring from it, as affecting both our duty towards the colonies in their present straits, and the future tendencies of South African policy.

At the outset, we are bound to remark that the present Zulu panic contrasts rather sharply with the blind confidence in Cetywayo which the Natal Government, until quite a recent period, entertained. This confidence appears to have been based upon a belief that the Government, through its Secretary for Native Affairs, could always influence Cetywayo in the direction of its own wishes. Sir Theophilus Shepstone's great abilities, his unequalled knowledge of the Zulu character, his personal kindnesses towards Cetywayo, and the great respect which the Zulu king professed for him, went a long way to justify this reliance. But personal influence can at best only count for so much, even when we have more responsible parties to deal with than savages. We have no reason to suppose that our interests suffered in the hands of Sir Theophilus Shepstone, but it was unquestionably an error to trust so much to individual authority. The whole course of British policy towards the Zulus seems to have been made to depend entirely upon Sir Theophilus Shepstone's personal influence; and the system by which Cetywayo was at once kept in check and in humour was so much his own, that no other person has since been able to work it. In the present condition of the Zulu question there is, of course, a strong temptation to suppose that the Shepstone policy has broken down, and that this failure has naturally brought us into hostile relations

* "The South African Question." *Maga*, vol. cxxiv. p. 97 (July 1878).

with Cetwayo. Until our recent dealings with the Zulu king have been more closely inquired into, it would be rash to return such a verdict upon Sir Theophilus Shepstone's policy towards the Zulus. In the meantime, we may point to the fact, which may or may not be of significance, that for the statesman who of all others was presumed to be the highest authority on Zululand and the Zulus, Sir Theophilus has kept himself much in the background during the present trouble.

Apart from all the late disputes which have culminated in the present war, the fact is to be borne in mind, that Cetwayo's power had become dangerous to our colonies, and that a Kafir king, when he finds himself at the head of warriors, is never satisfied until he has tried his strength. Our career in South Africa has furnished us with many instances of this. We have never yet found the Kafirs yield to any argument but physical force; and as soon as that was withdrawn, they have always seemed to feel that their obligations were removed at the same time. We have never yet had the experience that favours or protection constituted any claim of gratitude at their hands, unless we were in a position to make good our demands by the strong arm. In the case of Cetwayo, we are conscious of having deserved a better return for our benefits than his present outbreak. The Natal Government made him its special *protégé*, espoused his interests in his differences with his neighbours, and generally contributed to the establishment of that power which we now find it necessary to break. When he came to the throne, the Government extended a formal recognition to him that, we believe, had not been previously shown to any South African potentate. Mr Shepstone, with a mili-

tary escort, went into Zululand, and bore the principal part in the coronation ceremonials of the new king. Whatever anxieties the colonists may have felt—and the dread of native outbreaks is never long absent from the Natal settler—the Durban Government appears to have had implicit confidence in its own ability to influence Cetwayo. We even, it is to be feared, encouraged him at the outset in the formation of that military force which has been the source of so much calamity both to him and to ourselves. It is alleged that the Zulu army, and its threatening aspect towards the Boers, was turned to political account when reasons were wanted to justify annexation in the Transvaal; and if there is any foundation for this statement, we cannot be insensible to some appearance of retribution in our present difficulties.

With the annexation of the Transvaal, we took the place of the Boers as Cetwayo's chief enemies, and succeeded to the feud at which he had for so long held the Dutch republicans. The Zulus have for a good many years back complained of Boer encroachments, probably with more or less of just grounds; and they succeeded to some extent in interesting the Natal Government in their grievances. That Cetwayo refrained from forcibly asserting his territorial rights on the Transvaal side, was due to the counsels of the Natal Government and its Secretary for Native Affairs, who seem to have put off the Zulu king with vague and indefinite promises of seeing him righted on a future occasion. The Home Government, when the subject was brought to its notice, expressed an opinion adverse to interfering in territorial disputes between Cetwayo and the Boers. The general conclusion, however, that we come to from the published despatches

is, that Mr Shepstone had encouraged Cetywayo to hope that his good offices would be exerted in effecting an arrangement favourable to Zulu interests, and that some such inducement had been held out to him to keep him back from war. On the annexation of the Transvaal, however, Cetywayo fancied that his hopes were farther than ever from being realised, and that the British were preparing to establish such legal title as would justify them in retaining possession of the tracts in dispute. This was a territory lying on the western border of Zululand, between the Buffalo and the Pongolo, upon which the Transvaal farmers had been allowed to graze their herds, and which they alleged had been formally granted to them by the Zulu king. Soon after annexation, Cetywayo occupied a portion of the contested country, building on it a wattled kraal in token of his sovereignty; and wasted the farms round about, killing numbers of persons, and driving off their cattle. At this time we had sufficient provocation to have justified those extreme measures which we have now been compelled to have recourse to; but an attempt was made, instead, to effect a peaceful settlement of Cetywayo's grievances, so that no reflection of injustice might rest upon our policy.

In October 1877 a meeting was arranged between Sir Theophilus Shepstone and Cetywayo's envoys, for the discussion of the frontier difficulty, and to settle if possible some means of mutual reconciliation. Sir Theophilus had never before found the Zulu king intractable, but on this occasion Cetywayo's conduct in the preliminary negotiations forbade all hope of any accommodation on his side. The language used by the Zulu chiefs towards the Shepstones is

said, on good authority, to have been most uncompromising: in the discussion on the disputed territory a chief is reported to have grossly insulted Sir Theophilus with menacing gestures; and the only terms that the Zulus would accept were the absolute and immediate cession of the whole country claimed by them. Sir Theophilus broke up the negotiations, and returned to Natal in disgust; and from this time there appears to have been very little hope of persuading Cetywayo to come to a peaceable understanding. The king himself, however, again made overtures for arbitration to the Natal Government—but, chiefly for the sake of gaining time and of delaying the retribution which he could not fail to see must speedily overtake him for the numerous acts of violence committed by his followers in British territory, for his frequent raids upon our borders, and for the repeated insults with which all the warnings addressed to him by the colonial authorities were treated. That he had no intention of maintaining a peaceful attitude, or of containing himself within his own boundaries, the boasts of his tribe, and the threats thrown out to British traders in Zululand, afford unmistakable proof.

We may claim some merit for Sir Bartle Frere and his advisers, on the ground that though serious causes of complaint against Cetywayo were pending, and though fresh sources of grievance were constantly accumulating, the Government at once yielded to Cetywayo's request to appoint a Commission to settle the boundary difficulty. In this task they received little cordiality or assistance from the Zulus. The Zulus tendered no evidence of their own claims, and merely confined themselves to denying the assertions made by the Transvaal

colonists, that Cetywayo had ceded to them the country between the Buffalo and the Pongolo. The Commission gave a decision generally in favour of the Zulu sovereignty; and this cause of difference, which Cetywayo has for some time back alleged to be the only impediment to his friendship with the British, was removed in a manner that sets forth clearly the justice and liberality of our policy in South Africa. In December last this award was communicated to Cetywayo. The territory declared to belong to Zululand was to be at once marked off and made over; and the only reservation was the saving of the rights of *bonâ fide* British settlers, which our Government was of course bound to protect from sustaining injury through the transfer. But while we were thus doing all in our power to give Cetywayo his due, we were, on the other hand, vainly striving to induce him to redress our grievances against the Zulu State; and to remove the manifest danger arising from the maintenance of an extravagant military force, for which he had no employment, and for the sustenance of which he had no adequate means.

Before specifying the several outrages which have precipitated the quarrel between us and the Zulus, it may be well to say a few words about the boasted military organisation of Cetywayo's warriors. The Zulu nation is of comparatively recent importance in South-eastern Africa, having been raised from a small tribe tributary to the Umtetwas, by the ambition and military talents of the bloodthirsty Chakka, to be one of the greatest powers with which the Dutch "voortrekkers" or pioneers came into contact. Under Chakka the Zulus overran Natal and the Transvaal, making themselves dreaded all the way from Dela-

goa Bay to the frontiers of the Cape Colony. The massacre of the Dutch emigrants by Chakka's brother and successor, Dingaan—still commemorated in the town of "Weenen"—made the Zulu name a terror to the colonists, which even the increasing strength of our Natal settlers, and their greater familiarity with Zulu warfare, have perhaps, even at this period, not wholly removed. The successors of Chakka and Dingaan, however, were not able to maintain the same wide sway. The British crept in upon them from Natal, and the Boers from the western side of their country. Other tribes which had been content to fight under the Zulu banner when it led to certain victory and plunder, fell off and became independent; new chiefs, like Moselkatze, were eclipsing the Zulu glories; and when the present king, Cetywayo, succeeded his father Panda as king of the Zulus in 1872, he mainly owed his position to British recognition, and to the zeal with which Mr Shepstone used his influence in getting the chiefs of his country to accept his rule. We seem to have had some view in those days of making Zululand a "model Kafir kingdom,"—a dream that, like most others of the same kind, generally changes to a reality of disappointment and difficulty. The good resolutions which Cetywayo made at his installation were speedily belied by his turbulent conduct towards other tribes, his cruel and tyrannical treatment of his subjects, and his evident ambition to make a name for himself in war. When he found that the British Government were naturally disposed to discourage his bellicose disposition, he bitterly complained that we were infringing his dignity, because we would not allow him "to wash his spears" in the blood of his enemies, as became a sovereign of his dig-

nity and nation. He turned all his able-bodied subjects into soldiers, forbidding them to marry until they had "washed their spears," and bound down his whole tribesmen to his will by laws of a most oppressive and despotic character. As his military power increased, his arrogance and pretensions naturally grew in the same proportion. He was constantly reviving claims to all the countries which the Zulus had ever raided over; and if the area of Chakka's incursions be taken into account, this title would, if admitted, have placed him in possession of most ample boundaries. To maintain a force of from 30,000 to 40,000 fighting men was no easy matter; to provide work for them was still more difficult; and Cetywayo must have found himself placed in serious straits by his policy, which impoverished his country and discontented his people. There was naturally a large war party; while a smaller number, comprising, however, some of the king's nearer relations, have counselled him to give up his mad schemes and yield to the wishes of the British. Unfortunately, Cetywayo soon allowed himself to get into such a position that it would almost have cost him his kingdom to retrace his steps. His military power had become scarcely less dangerous to himself than to his neighbours, and to have disappointed the expectations of his warriors would have been to run a considerable risk of having to deal with a revolution in his own country. Moreover, the little wars that within the last few years we have been waging in other parts of South Africa, have naturally had an unsettling influence on a horde of armed savages standing by looking for an enemy; and we regret to say that in none of these cases has the punishment which we inflicted been either so prompt or so signal as to be

likely to produce any very deterrent effect upon the Zulus. In these troubles Cetywayo took a keen interest. He has sent encouraging messages to several chiefs who were in arms against the British. He egged on Secocoeni against the Boers of the Transvaal, and latterly against our own Government. He had become a source of danger, not merely to his own neighbours, but to the whole of the discontented races in South-east Africa, who were in danger of being misled by his emissaries. He expelled missionaries from his country because they saw and bore testimony to his cruel treatment of his subjects, and endeavoured to take the part of those miserable wretches. Sir Bartle Frere tells us that the British Government has again and again had to check his purposes of aggression against unoffending tribes. "Cetywayo has, at the same time, formally and repeatedly requested the consent of the British Government to wars of aggression, which he proposed, not for any purpose of self-defence, but simply to initiate his young soldiers in bloodshed, and to provide a system of unprovoked territorial aggression by the Zulus, which had for many years been laid aside."

We come now to the *casus belli*—the quarrels which led to the recent *ultimatum*, and to the expedition into the Zulu country. The sketch we have given above of Cetywayo and his position will enable our readers to understand how these matters, not in themselves offences of the highest magnitude, should have come to be regarded as affording a legitimate and necessary basis for hostilities. Foremost among these come violations of British territory, and raids into the domains of tribes with whom we were in friendship, and who naturally looked to us for protection. Another complaint was,

that two Zulu women had been forcibly carried away from British territory and put to death by stoning. The offender in those cases was the chief Sirayo, and Cetywayo met the demand for satisfaction by an inadequate offer of compensation. A number of assaults upon British subjects in British territories during the past year was also added to the charge, and more or less satisfaction demanded in compensation. In all these cases friendly efforts were made to induce Cetywayo to do justice, but in no instance with success. His replies to our representations are a good illustration of his character, being sometimes insolent, sometimes conciliatory, but always evasive. The Natal settlers who neighboured the Zulu country appear to have known all the time that Cetywayo would not come into the views of the British authorities, but would keep playing with their demands so long as their patience lasted. Even after he was aware that the award had been given in his favour in his claims on the Transvaal frontier, his hostility to the British appeared to increase rather than diminish. Threats of coming war were openly uttered by the Zulus; and curiously enough, a favourite boast of Cetywayo's warriors was, that as the Queen of England had been obliged to send for "coolie soldiers" from India to enable her to hold her own at home, her troops would never be able to withstand the Zulus in Africa. Traders have testified, too, that hopes of coming plunder from British territories, and from the countries of tribes friendly to us, have been indulged in to an extravagant extent in Zululand during the past six months, and have been held out by Cetywayo himself to keep his men in humour, and reconcile them to the harshness of his system.

It is important to note, that while

all through the past autumn the South African authorities have seen that a Zulu war could not be postponed, her Majesty's Government was doing its best to urge upon Sir Bartle Frere the necessity for "exercising prudence," and "by meeting the Zulus in a spirit of forbearance and reasonable compromise, to avert the very serious evil of a war with Cetywayo." This was in October last; and again, on 21st November Sir M. Hicks Beach, in acceding to reiterated urgent demands for reinforcements, writes as follows:—

"It is my duty to impress upon you that, in supplying these reinforcements, it is the desire of her Majesty's Government not to furnish means of a campaign of invasion or conquest, but to afford such protection as may be necessary at this juncture to the lives and property of the colonists. Though the present aspect of affairs is menacing in a high degree, I can by no means arrive at the conclusion that war with the Zulus should be unavoidable; and I am confident that you [Sir Bartle Frere], in concert with Sir H. Bulwer, will use every effort to overcome the existing difficulties by judgment and forbearance, and to avoid an evil so much to be deprecated as a Zulu war."

Anything less like a "lust for aggression" and "imperialist tendencies" than the opinions and instructions sent by the Cabinet to the Cape it would be difficult to imagine. The Government conscientiously acted on the old adage, "*Si vis pacem, para bellum.*" It provided for the safety of our colonists, while it impressed on the High Commissioner the necessity for doing all that could be done, with justice to our South African subjects and to the dignity of the British Government, to avoid hostilities with Cetywayo. In considering whether Sir Bartle Frere acted up to the "spirit of forbearance and reasonable compromise" prescribed to him by the Secretary of State,

there are several points to be taken into account by critics who are removed from the scene of action. It must be remembered that Cetywayo is not the only intractable chief with whom the South African Governments have to deal; that others are standing by watching the quarrel between the British and the Zulus with keen interest; and that any signs of weakness or hesitancy upon our part would simply be to bring a swarm of hornets upon us from every troubled point on the British border. We must remember, too, that to have given Cetywayo his due without exacting from him our own in return, would have at once been interpreted by the king himself as a sign of fear, and would have precipitated his invasion of our colonies. Sir Bartle Frere appears to have avoided all menace and threats in his negotiations with Cetywayo; and we may infer from the name which the Kafirs have given him, "*the dog that bites before he barks*," that he has made use of no bluster or effort at coercion to influence Cetywayo's choice between peace and war.

On the 11th December, British Commissioners met Cetywayo's representatives on the Natal side of the Tugela, and delivered to the latter the text of the Transvaal award, fixing the line of boundary as running from the junction of the Buffalo and Blood rivers, along the latter to its source in the Magidela mountains, and thence direct to a round hill between the two main sources of the Pongolo river in the Drachensberg. The Zulu envoys received this part of the communication with lively satisfaction, and did not conceal that they had been dealt with more liberally than they had expected. But as the High Commissioner's message went on to recite the offences committed by Cetywayo against British territory,

to lay down the terms at which these were to be condoned, and to insist upon the king fulfilling those promises of good government which he had made to Sir Theophilus Shepstone at his coronation, the Zulus became visibly disconcerted, and did not scruple to admit that they had little hope of securing their master's compliance. Twenty days were given to Cetywayo to give up the men who had carried off the Zulu women from our territory, and to pay a fine of 500 head of cattle for the same offence; and also to pay a fine of 100 head of cattle for an outrage on two of our surveyors. Cetywayo was also required to surrender Umbiline, a Swasi refugee, who was harbouring with the Zulu king, and who had led numerous raids into our territory, killing many persons, and carrying off women and children and much booty. A strong recommendation to disband the Zulu army, and to remove the restrictions on marriage which were operating so oppressively upon the people, was also given; and that the king might have an assurance of the interest of the British Government in the proper management of his territories, as well as a security against annoyance from other tribes, a British officer was to reside in Zululand or on its border, "who will be the eyes and ears and mouth of the British Government towards the Zulu king and the great council of the nation." Some journals have made the mistake, in criticising the terms of the *ultimatum*, of supposing that Cetywayo had only twenty days to accept or decline all these conditions, and have talked as if we were going to war because he refused to have a British resident forced upon them. This is not the case. The twenty days had reference solely to the delivery of the Sirayo raiders and the payment

of the 600 head of cattle imposed as penalties. No specified period was laid down for carrying out the other wishes of the High Commissioner; and had Cetywayo agreed to these very moderate demands, we cannot doubt that ample consideration would have been shown him both as to the time and the manner of reforming his administration. The *ultimatum* was a simple and certain test of his disposition to choose between peace and war, and his treatment of it at once dispelled any doubts that might have still existed regarding his real intentions.

Assured as Sir Bartle Frere and Lord Chelmsford both were that there was no escape from a Zulu war, the question arises whether their military preparations were on a scale sufficiently ample for meeting Cetywayo and his 40,000 Zulus. Since the disaster near Rorke's Drift there has naturally been a feeling that we ought to have taken the field with more men and with a force of regular cavalry. On the other hand, the preparations were considered quite sufficient for over-running the Zulu country by all the colonial authorities who have had experience of South African warfare. Lord Chelmsford apparently did not consider himself justified in formally asking the War Office for a regiment of cavalry, although he pointed out that dragoons would be of immense advantage. Sir Bartle Frere, in recommending that cavalry should be sent out to the Cape, seems to have had as much in view the political effect of such a force on the natives generally as their special need in the Zulu campaign. The startling effect which the appearance of the 7th Dragoon Guards produced upon the Boers at Zwart Kopjies in 1845 is still an African tradition; and there can be no doubt that a cavalry

regiment would have been of the utmost service, as well as of immense moral advantage, to us in the campaign. But on the other hand, we must not too rashly condemn the scruples of Lord Chelmsford to bring British cavalry into a region where the "horse-sickness" of the country may play such terrible havoc. In the Secocoeni and other campaigns, we have lately had fatal experience of the imprudence of using "unsalted" horses—that is, cattle which have not already been seasoned by an attack of the disease. Those who desire more information upon this subject will find their curiosity fully satisfied in a recent book, which will be read with great interest at the present moment—'The Transvaal of To-day'—by Mr Aylward, who commanded the Boer forces against Secocoeni during the last years of the Republic's existence, and whose book contains a valuable amount of information on Zulu and Kafir warfare. From the 1st September to 25th May the climate of the Bushveld, or low country, under which classification falls a considerable tract of the Zulu territory, where our troops may have to operate, is fraught with danger both to men and horses, especially the latter. To guard against "horse-sickness," Mr Aylward recommends travellers and troops

"Never to permit their horses to bite grass or drink water until the morning mists, haze, or miasma, with which the low grounds are frequently covered, should have been first entirely dissipated, leaving the veld dry. The horses consequently should be fed at night, and only allowed to graze at will during the later and warmer parts of each day. This will be best effected by the English sportsman bringing proper nose-bags and head-stalls with him, by the use of which, with great care and attention, I have seen delicate and valuable animals preserved, where

there were no stables, during very bad seasons. It is the general opinion that the poison causing the fever is to be found in the dew. It is certain that horses eating dew-wet grasses during the sickly season almost invariably die. This is so firmly believed that I have known both Dutchmen and Englishmen to wash carefully every blade of grass or sheaf of oats coming from the damp air before it was admitted into their stables; and I must certainly say that this safeguard has been followed by good results.

"That there is something in the dew and miasma theory can be readily gathered from this fact: 'imported horses,' when properly stabled, and not allowed out except during the later and warmer hours of the day, seem very frequently to escape the disease altogether; but to an imported animal so kept, one single night's absence from shelter during the unhealthy time will always prove fatal. So much for unsalted horses. With regard to the 'salted' ones, or those presumed to have passed through the sickness, I can speak with considerable certainty, as I have had in my charge at various times large troops of these animals, amongst which were some of great value."

We must exercise some caution, therefore, in concluding that Lord Chelmsford was insensible to the advantages of employing regular cavalry in the expedition. Dragoons without horses are the most useless of all troops; and had a regiment been hastily despatched before the necessity for its presence was demonstrated, there would in all probability have been an outcry on the other side, had the cavalry suffered from horse-sickness, and the movements of the troops been impeded in consequence. The recent disaster in Zululand does not appear to have been altogether owing to a want of cavalry; and if the promptitude with which the Government is now hurrying out horse to the seat of war is reassuring, it is rather because the colonial authorities want an impressive military

force at command to deter the other tribes from plucking up courage to attack us, than that we have great hopes of cavalry being of the first assistance to us in fighting the "rocks and caves of Zululand." The most reasonable regret to be indulged in at the present moment is, that a regiment which would have been so useful to us at the present moment as the Cape Mounted Rifles, should have been disbanded by Mr Cardwell, to carry out a policy which seemed selfish to the colonists, and from which the imperial Government cannot be said to have derived any economical advantages in the long-run.

The advance of the British into Zululand certainly took place under most favourable auspices. There had been plenty of time to make preparations; the force was a larger and better equipped body of troops than we had ever previously put in the field in South Africa; the provision for transport and for the preservation of communications was declared by the military and colonial authorities to be all that could be desired. The colonial journals prophesied a possibility of hard fighting, but the certainty of an early victory. We knew that the Zulus far outnumbered the expeditionary force; but any misgivings that were expressed on that account, seemed more than counterbalanced by the assurance that the Zulus would never meet us *en masse*. On this point we must wait the issue of the contest, by which Lord Chelmsford's arrangements will be more fairly judged, rather than by any criticisms which we might be hastily tempted to put forth at present. Success in war will condone any blunder; while the most carefully laid plans, the most cautiously matured tactics, never come through the ordeal of failure with credit.

The advance into Zululand was made by four columns, acting simultaneously upon a concerted plan of operations. From the Natal frontier three forces crossed the Tugela and Buffalo rivers, while a fourth advanced from the Transvaal border, crossing the Blood River, and keeping its base on the town of Utrecht. Colonel Pearson, with 2200 Europeans and 2000 natives, crossed the Tugela at Fort Williamson, not far above the mouth of the river, and was to advance by the coast-road into the heart of the country. The two centre columns, the right under Colonel Durnford, and the left under Colonel Glyn, crossed the Tugela at Krantz Kop and Rorke's Drift respectively, and having rendezvoused in front of the latter place, were to advance by the principal road through Zululand towards the capital, which lies from Rorke's Drift in a north-easterly direction. At a point fifteen miles south of Ulundi, Cetywayo's principal kraal, the main body of the army was to be joined by Colonel Pearson's column. An attack was then to be made on Cetywayo's kraal from the front, while the Utrecht column under Colonel Wood was at the same time to take the Zulus on their western flank. Such, roughly described, appears to have been Lord Chelmsford's proposed strategy; and it corresponds in the main with the course suggested in his memorandum, dated September 14, 1878, read by Lord Cadogan in the House of Lords. Lord Chelmsford's scheme also made arrangements for guarding the extensive Natal frontier, as well as that of the Transvaal, from Zulu incursions while our troops were engaged in the interior of the country.

The fullest accounts that can be put together regarding the disaster to the centre column are as yet

sadly defective, and suggest a number of difficulties that we must trust to further information for removing. We know, however, that our right and left centres got safely across the frontier, and carried out their proposed junction in front of Rorke's Drift. They had apparently information of the presence of a large Zulu army in front, but do not seem to have had cause for apprehending an attack on the rear. A force consisting of five companies of the 1st battalion of the 24th Regiment, and a company of the 2d battalion, with 2 guns, 2 rocket-tubes, 104 mounted colonials, and 800 natives, were left behind to guard the camp, which contained a valuable convoy of supplies, while Lord Chelmsford with the rest of his force advanced to clear the way. This was on the morning of the 22d January. Lord Chelmsford, it would seem, speedily found himself engaged with the enemy in the wooded and broken country in front. According to Lord Chelmsford's own account, which at present we are in justice bound to lay most stress upon, "the Zulus came down in overwhelming numbers" upon the camp, destroyed the great body of our troops, about 600, and apparently captured the whole of the valuable stores of provision and ammunition upon which our further advance must have mainly depended. Our men must have made a desperate defence, for the Zulu loss is set down at 5000, or nearly ten times that of ours. Such a disaster, so unexpected, so inexplicable, at once raises a feeling that "some one had blundered;" and the hurried language in which the Commander-in-chief announces the event, gives a double force to the suspicion. Lord Chelmsford's words are: "It would seem that the troops were enticed away from their camp, as the action occurred

about one mile and a quarter outside it." We must point out, however, that this mistake, if it was really made, could not have been the whole extent of the error, for the Zulus must in some way or other have been allowed to turn the flank of the main body before they could have fallen upon the camp behind. From Insandusana, or Isandula, where the disaster took place, to the point where Lord Chelmsford had been engaged in the front with the Zulus, was a distance of not more than twelve miles; and some explanation would seem to be required of how so large a body of men could be so utterly destroyed, and a booty so cumbersome and valuable carried off, without apparently any diversion having been made by the main column in its favour, until it was too late to be of any use. The official accounts bear out the opinion that the troops must have moved from the camp to attack the Zulus, probably on finding their communications with the main body cut off; and that they were surrounded and cut down in the forest, which would be of the utmost assistance to the attacking Zulus. In justice both to the dead and the living, a more detailed and calmer examination must be made of the alleged breach of orders, as well as of the position chosen for the camp, than the hasty, and doubtless passionate, conclusions which the last Cape mails brought home. When Lord Chelmsford arrived on the scene of action, all was over—the camp plundered, and its defenders slain. Without provisions, means of transport, and ammunition, it was of course impossible for him to proceed; and the latest accounts represent him as having recrossed the Tugela and returned to Helpmakaar, which had been the base of the left-centre column before it passed the river. Here every pre-

paration was being actively pushed on for another start, and we trust that before this time the centre of our army has retrieved the unfortunate commencement of the campaign.

It is with very mixed feelings that we hear of the gallant advance of the other two columns from the Lower Tugela and from Utrecht into the Zulu country. If we were certain that they could succeed in effecting a junction and in destroying Cetywayo's kraal by themselves, we should feel that they had more than redeemed the misfortune of the central column. We have a sufficiently high opinion of British troops to hope that such a possibility is not too far-fetched to be gloriously realised. Colonel Pearson appears to have made excellent progress since crossing the Lower Tugela Drift. At the River Inyoni, the first stream of considerable size after passing the frontier, Colonel Pearson was opposed by a force of 4000 Zulus, whom he drove off after an hour's fighting, with considerable loss. By the 23d January, the same day as Lord Chelmsford had to retire, Pearson's force had reached Ekhowa, an important point on the road to Ulundi, about 25 miles from the Tugela. The Naval Brigade accompanying this column has rendered capital service, and is evidently destined to be of great use in the campaign. Ekhowa has been strongly fortified, and Colonel Pearson, by the latest accounts, was looking carefully after his communications. There is every reason to expect that a portion of the Zulu force which had opposed Lord Chelmsford will now be directed against our right wing; and the more the celerity with which the centre can again resume operations, the greater the chances of Colonel Pearson being able to continue his advance must

be. The latest news represent the Zulus as concentrating round Pearson's position, so that sharp fighting may be expected from the direction of Ekhowa. The Transvaal column, under Colonel Wood, engaged the enemy on 24th January, two days after the mishap at Rorke's Drift, and scattered a force of 4000 Zulus with only a trifling loss on our side; but he subsequently appears to have fallen back on Utrecht, probably in obedience to orders from headquarters. Of the encounters with the enemy which are reported from Rorke's Drift subsequent to the disaster at Insandusana, we cannot say much, except that they afford us a reassurance that we are still holding that position, and that the falling back of the force on Helpmakaar has not so damped the spirits of the troops that they are afraid to encounter a vastly superior force of the enemy. If we can hold the Zulus so well at bay with so small a force and such insufficient protection as Rorke's Drift affords, there is good hope that we shall find ourselves more than a match for them when Lord Chelmsford's columns again take the field.

So far as the meagre and generally conflicting reports show, the above is the position in which our troops, whether in Zululand or on the border, are now placed. The situation is full of anxiety, but by no means desperate. We have every confidence that we shall be able to confine the Zulus within their own territory, where Colonels Pearson and Wood will, we hope, presently find them occupation. On the vigour and decision which Lord Chelmsford displays in getting the centre columns again in motion, must depend not only his own reputation, but the issue of the war. His position at present is surrounded with difficulties into which we can all fully enter. On the one

hand, he must be naturally anxious that the other two columns should be allowed to advance, so that his own disaster might not have the appearance of having given a general check to the whole expedition; while, on the other, he cannot be free from a feeling of uneasiness as to their ability to hold their ground in the heart of Zululand without the immediate support of the centre columns. There will be also a strong temptation to hold back until the reinforcements from England arrive to strengthen the army; but there is also the danger that the Zulus might gather both courage and strength from such delay, as well as that other discontented tribes might grasp at the idea that the British power had received a decided check. These are difficulties amid which Lord Chelmsford must make up his mind. He is in a great measure free from the telegraphic control which restricts so seriously the liberty of most commanders-in-chief nowadays in the field, while it can hardly be said to lessen their responsibilities. It has often been said that it is a higher test of generalship to retrieve a disaster than to follow up an advantage.

But though we cannot permit ourselves to look for any alternative except a successful termination to the war, we have been brought face to face with possibilities which compel us to wait the final issue with anxiety. We have a powerful enemy to conquer and a difficult country to overrun. Fatal experience has told us that bush-fighting always costs us more men than do pitched battles; and the country by which Cetywayo's forces are covered will give them many opportunities of harassing us with impunity. Mr Aylward, from whose book, 'The Transvaal of To-day,' we have already quoted, gives

some very striking pictures of the disadvantages which European troops labour under when fighting a savage foe, who can turn every rock, every tree, and every cave into a point of attack for his enemy and of shelter for himself. Along roads which defy ordinary means of transport, a force may march through the very heart of a Zulu or Kafir army without seeing a foe until the signal for attack has been given. If anything could damp the spirit of the British soldier, it would be having to thus fight an unseen enemy; and that our men have behaved with such admirable bravery and patience in other African wars and in New Zealand, is even a higher compliment to the army than steadiness in open campaigns, where the soldier is more of a machine and less thrown upon his own wits than in such expeditions as that to the north of the Tugela. In the present war the opening disaster at Rorke's Drift has given the army a motive for stern and decisive action which will carry it through all dangers and fatigue until the slight we have sustained has been more than avenged in the overthrow of the savage power that has forced us into hostilities. We trust, before many mails arrive from the Cape, to hear that Cetuywayo has learned to estimate the danger of provoking British hostility, and that the Zulu power has been so thoroughly broken as to have finally ceased to be a source of fear to our colonists and native neighbours in South Africa.

But though the subjection of the Zulus is the first and most important matter in hand, it forms only a part of a very difficult subject that demands serious attention, and that will not be easily settled to the satisfaction of both the Home Government and the colonies. We must, by some means

or other, put an end to the interminable series of little wars that are the great barrier to the progress of the South African colonies, and that always end by causing trouble to the imperial Parliament and expense to the imperial Treasury. Even if we had no past experience to fall back upon in confirmation of our views, the present condition of affairs in South Africa justifies the opinion that we have been going upon an unsound system, or rather on no system at all, in the management of native affairs. When we have checked a native tribe, we have seldom set ourselves seriously to the task of consolidating it into the general body of our subjects, but have rather allowed it to remain apart under its hereditary chiefs, to be a source of disquiet, and perhaps annoyance, at some time when we were ill-prepared to have it upon our hands. When we have punished them, it has been more in the spirit of a schoolmaster chastising a naughty child than of a Government whose mission was to extend order and civilisation along its confines. We have had too much of the free-and-easy spirit of Sir Harry Smith in our policy, whose counsel to the native chiefs was: "Keep the peace; attend to your missionaries: then your cattle will get fat, and you will get to heaven." Mistaken leniency has in more than one case offered premiums to rebellion and to encroachments on British territory; and the political disputes of the white races have not unfrequently been forwarded by intriguing with the black tribes. The present Zulu difficulty will have failed to teach us our duty to our South African colonies, unless we effect far more secure arrangements for their safety all along our frontiers than have hitherto been carried out. The disarmament of all

the native tribes who come under our protectorate is a duty that can no longer be shirked; and the illicit trade in selling arms to the savages, which has been so unblushingly carried on in all our South African colonies, and which has contributed so much to render our position insecure at the present time, ought to be stamped out by all the power of the local Governments. Great complaints have been made regarding the trade in arms which the Portuguese settlement of Lorenzo Marquez, on Delagoa Bay, has been driving with the Zulus, the Swasis, and other savage nations; but it is more than probable that much of the outcry has been raised to divert blame from parties nearer home who were much more deeply implicated. To deprive the natives of such temptations to mischief as arms afford, must be one of the first steps towards the end of our South African troubles. Another is a better delimitation of our borders, so that the unfortunate territorial disputes which are constantly cropping up may be put an end to, and the natives taught to seek for justice in our High Courts, instead of taking it at their own hands upon the life and property of their nearest white neighbours. It is, no doubt, a serious task to break powerful tribes from savagery to a settled and law-abiding life; but we can no more shrink from the task than we can contract the limits of our colonisation. Both in Natal and in the Cape Colony the natives who have settled on the "reserves" or "locations" have made great progress in civilisation, have acquired and set store by the rights of citizens, and have in a great number of cases shown anxiety to educate their children. Whenever we have supplanted the power of the chief by that of the resident magistrate, all goes well; it is only where the tribal feelings and the

claims of chiefship are allowed to maintain their influence that we fail to make the natives peaceable. This native problem is undoubtedly the great question of the future in South Africa; and we cannot trust to having it settled by time, as in other parts of the world. While the Australian aborigines, the Maories in New Zealand, and the Indians in America are dying out under white civilisation, the black races in our African colonies are increasing rapidly, and at a far higher ratio than is known among the wild tribes, where war and starvation exercise of course a considerable check upon population.

The Boers, on the whole, have given us scarcely less trouble than the blacks, and have been even more obstinate to deal with. Their bigoted aversion to British rule, and propensity for "trekking," have in most cases been the cause of our being compelled to extend our frontier far beyond the limits which our own colonisation demanded. They encroached upon native territories; and when they had drawn down upon themselves the wrath of the chiefs, their weakness commonly compelled British interference in the interests of the general peace of the country. There is no question but the present war in Zululand, as well as that against Secocoeni, are largely due to the Boer encroachments, and have come to us as a *damnosa hereditas* with the Transvaal. We do not mean that the annexation of the Transvaal has of itself embroiled us with either Secocoeni or Cetywayo; for even though we had allowed that State to retain its independence, we should have been compelled to have fought both, to keep them from overrunning the Transvaal and slaughtering its farmers, who apparently found it difficult to hold their ground against even the less

powerful of the two chiefs when acting by himself. With the annexation of the Transvaal, we trust that there will be an end of the stubborn spirit of resistance to British rule which has worked so strongly against the unification of colonial interests; and that our new subjects will at last recognise the necessity for loyally aiding her Majesty's Government in giving to all the races in South Africa under its sway a more assured protection, and a better meed of prosperity, than the divisions of the country have ever yet permitted them to enjoy.

The general subject of the defence of our South African colonies is one that must inevitably come up for discussion, as soon as events in Zululand permit us to look a little ahead. In this respect, we are forced to the conclusion that the South African Governments have not realised their duty. They have contented themselves with applying temporary checks, and have trusted to the intervention of the Crown whenever affairs became too critical to be dealt with by colonial resources. We need not say that such a policy is not likely to earn commendation from the British taxpayer at the present moment. The claims of the colonies on the mother-country have always had due weight given to them in these pages; and we have steadily maintained that it was our duty to supply means of defence to every corner of the empire which was not able to protect itself. We have always held that the abolition of the Cape Mounted Rifles and other colonial corps by Mr Gladstone's Government, was an unwise and reprehensible measure, the evil effects of which are bitterly realised in South Africa at the present time. But with all our sympathies in favour of colonial claims on

the Home Government for military assistance, we cannot deny the fact that the South African colonies have leant too heavily upon the Crown in this matter. The present is not a fitting time to recapitulate the way in which the African legislatures have evaded the question of colonial defence—have bandied about from one to another the duty of providing for the protection of the borders—have sought to tide over difficulties by police, levies, "commandoes," and other makeshifts—and have almost invariably ended by falling back on the imperial Government. Most of all the African "little wars" could have been checked at the outset by the colonies themselves, at comparatively little outlay, compared with the expenditure that must be incurred when imperial troops are put into the field. The cost to the mother-country of the Zulu campaign, apart from the sacrifice of British soldiers which has actually taken place and is still to follow, will inspire us with a more lively interest in South African confederation and inter-colonial defence than the home public have hitherto shown, and ought to give a powerful impetus towards a satisfactory settlement of these much-debated matters.

The temper of the country on the Zulu war has expressed itself, both inside and out of Parliament, in favour of the course which Government has pursued. The despatches already published make clear that Government had no wish to wage war with Cetywayo, and no object to forward by such a step; but yielded because it felt bound to defer to the representations of imminent danger which came to it from all classes, and from every quarter of South Africa; and to the assurances which it received that we had no alternative but to

choose between fighting the Zulus in their own country, and allowing them to overrun and devastate our colonies, and to bring the horrors of war into the homesteads of our settlers. No Government could have turned a deaf ear to such warnings as Sir Bartle Frere and the colonial authorities sent home towards the end of last year. And when it became evident that war could not be evaded, it was nothing more than the duty of Government to the country to insist that Lord Chelmsford should limit his military establishment to the force absolutely necessary to effect his object. Between a general asking for troops in war time, and a nation grumbling over unnecessary military expenditure, a Government has to hit a very fine mean if it is to please all parties. Until the disaster at Insandusana the force under Lord Chelmsford was looked upon as amply sufficient for reducing Cetywayo; and the Government was considered by the colonial press to have behaved with great liberality in the matter of troops. Since the news of Lord Chelmsford's check, the zeal with which every department of the Government has thrown itself into the task of expediting the despatch of reinforcements for Natal speaks for itself. The task of Government is now rather to oppose itself to any panic which may break out, than to stimulate the public interest in its exertions to aid our army. We must look upon the Insandusana disaster as one of those catastrophes which, like the loss of the *Eurydice*, or the explosion on board the *Thunderer*, fall outside the boundary of the keenest human prevision. It is a sad calamity, but we cannot afford to lose our heads over it.

With such insufficient information as we possess upon the most material points of the situation, the Zulu war is not yet ripe for parlia-

mentary discussion. The references in both Houses to African affairs, show that upon the merits of the questions involved parties have yet to make up their minds. Mr W. H. Smith's powerful speech at Westminster, two days before Parliament opened, was the first public intimation of the spirit in which the Government had received the news of Lord Chelmsford's reverse; and it at once gave a tone to the feelings of the country, and paved the way for the Ministerial statements in both Houses. The line taken up by Earl Granville does not indicate that the Liberal party have formed any decided opinions as to what course they are to pursue. He carped at Sir Bartle Frere's principles, which he said were "suspicious of any weakness in any line of defence, and not averse to immediate and energetic measures, not excluding war, to avoid possible future dangers." Such criticism, if not very generous, is not very damaging; and if Earl Granville feels that his duty to the Constitution requires him to malign an officer who is too far removed, and too hard pressed to have an opportunity of defending himself, we see no reason to stand in his way. Sir Bartle Frere's conduct of South African affairs will no doubt be keenly canvassed afterwards, but we cannot admit that her Majesty's Government are reflected upon when the Opposition choose to make him the subject of an attack. Lord Carnarvon, who has no disposition at present to justify the measures of Government, confessed that his experiences at the Colonial Office had convinced him of the justice of the Zulu war; while Lord Kimberley, who had also much official acquaintance with Zulu matters, seemed to think that we should have made war upon them long ago. In the Commons, Colonel Mure has evinc-

ed an interest in the Zulus explicable only by the instability of his seat for Renfrewshire; while Sir Charles Dilke contributed to the discussion a version of the difficulty, distorted by even more than his usual inaccuracy and extravagances. But the member for Chelsea is apparently acting for himself, and without any definite support from the leaders of the Liberal party. The Opposition as a body are still, we believe, sufficiently alive to their duty to the country in this crisis to refrain from any criticism that might obstruct the measures of Government for carrying through the Zulu war; and it must feel, besides, the hazard of committing itself to any particular line of censure until more definite information regarding the Zulu question, and the mode in which it has been dealt with by the colonial authorities, has been given to the public.

Perhaps the most notable fact in connection with the home aspects of the Zulu expedition, is the extraordinary reticence which Mr Gladstone has shown regarding it. A whole fortnight has elapsed since the news of the Insandusana affair reached England, and up to the time of our going to press the ex-Premier had not uttered a word or written a post-card that could give the slightest clue to the view he meant to take of the disaster. This silence is so unwonted as to make us much more uneasy than if Mr

Gladstone had thrown himself into the breach in half-a-dozen monthlies and double that number of speeches. In his case we have no reason to suppose that want of information has retarded his making up his mind as to the criminality of the Government, and its direct responsibility for a war which it has waged for purely selfish motives, and with the base view of influencing the constituencies at the coming elections. Whether he will go further, and recognise in Cetywayo the "Divine Figure of the South," the noble savage whose cause is the cause of liberty and benevolence, unjustly assailed by the unscrupulous Tory Ministry—the possessor of all those personal virtues which are so conspicuously missing in the characters of the Prime Minister and other members of the Cabinet,—we scarcely care to predict. Mr Gladstone is presently posing before the public as the candidate for a Scotch constituency which demands more moderate views than the ex-Premier has been in the habit of advancing for some time back; and he may very naturally dread the risk of offending the tastes of his future supporters by launching out into a wild course of agitation such as he embarked upon two years ago. Whether or not his impetuosity of temper has been sufficiently subordinated to these prudential considerations, will most likely be seen in the coming discussions in Parliament.

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REATA ; OR, WHAT'S IN A NAME.—PART I.

CHAPTER I.—CAFÉ SCHAUM.

“ Ist's noch der alte, unversöhnte Hass
Den ihr mit herbringt ? ”

—*Braut von Messina.*

Do you know the Café Schaum in Vienna? The chances are you do not; and yet it is a place of some note in its own particular way. Not that it can compete with the many brilliant establishments of its kind which have sprung up here of late years—establishments furnished with every luxury in the shape of lofty rooms, exquisite furniture and decorations, and all the hundred and one items of a paraphernalia which our grandfathers never dreamt of, but which their degenerate descendants consider mere necessities of life. No; in the Café Schaum there is not much to dazzle a stranger: most such would probably linger by the more attractive houses of this kind which abound in the pleasure-loving capital, instead of following me into the somewhat dingy, though thoroughly respectable, rooms in which this story opens.

The Café Schaum need fear no rivalry, for it has an original, almost
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an historical character—although, like most historical monuments, it is beginning to show signs of decay. For the first half of this century it was the military Café *par excellence*—the chief resort of every one belonging to, or interested in, the Austrian military service. In those days you would have been sure to find a room filled two-thirds with officers and one-third with civilians; now that is all modified, and there are as many black coats as uniforms among the frequenters of the time-honoured Café. But although the original character is modified, it is not effaced; old warriors go there from the force of habit, and young ones following tradition. No member of the fair sex ever sets foot within these walls. I will not, however, commit myself by asserting that the absence of gossip and scandal is as complete as the exclusion of all daughters of Eve would seem to vouch for.

The last fifty years have made

little change in the appearance of the Café Schaum; and it is probable that were the ghost of Radetzky, or any of his contemporaries who served his Majesty the Emperor of Austria half a century ago, to rise from his grave and stalk in here, he would find himself quite at home in the familiar old place. If, however, he lent an ear (can ghosts hear, by the way?) to the talk going on, the *ancien-régime* soldier would soon perceive how busy the world has been all these years, while he has been lying stark and stiff "with his martial cloak around him," and to what a very different state of things he has suddenly awoke.

But it is not with ghosts we have to do at present (though I must confess to a weakness for them); and if on this spring day of 1872 any of the said individuals are afloat, they remain invisible to the naked eye.

It is afternoon, and dozens of solitary men are reading their papers; groups of two and three or more men together, occupy the little marble tables that are dotted about the room. These groups are various. Group Number One consists of a stout, bald captain, in infantry uniform, and of a small, fair dragoon major, whose best point is decidedly his long fluffy whiskers. Group Number Two is more extensive, and somewhat juvenile, embracing several rather green-looking cadets, a few subalterns, and a tall, young civilian, who is smoking his cigar with an ostentatiously *blasé* air. Group Number Three is of a graver character: a couple of old gentlemen—one with blue spectacles, the other with a troublesome cough, and a colonel of the Lancers, who is treating his former comrades to a minute account of the state of his regiment. Group Number Four—well, we will not go further than Group Number Four, for you are

requested to pause here and take a better look. Two men are sitting at this table, and of these two men you are going to hear more. Among the many groups that are scattered about the coffee-room, there is only this one to which your attention is seriously called. The others—civilians or officers, old pensioners, and green cadets—may be as interesting in their way too; some of them for their histories that are past, others for their histories that are to come. Every one of the green cadets may be going to act a part in some thrilling adventure of love or bravery; and each one of the elders, even the stout, bald captain, whose face seems so utterly devoid of any expression, may have had some passages of interest, ay, of poetry, perhaps, in his past: but it is not with them we have to do; it is only at Group Number Four that you are asked to pause and look again.

The two men that are sitting at this table are both young, both well grown, and one of them is strikingly handsome—brothers, as their likeness tells at once.

The eldest looks a couple of years over thirty, whereas in reality he is a couple of years under. His sunburnt complexion adds to his age in appearance,—also his heavy eyebrows, the feature which strikes attention first. He is not to be called handsome exactly, with hair of a medium brown, and grey eyes, which look self-reliant and a little severe. A powerfully-built, grandly-formed man—broad-shouldered and tall. He is in plain clothes; but something in the bearing of his stalwart figure tells that he too, at no very distant period, has worn the hussar uniform, which becomes his younger brother so well.

The hussar is of much the same height, but more slender of figure, and more regular-featured. If the

other brother looks older than his age, this one looks younger; there is only a year between them in reality, but to look at the younger you would take him to be three or four and twenty. The eyebrows here are not bushy, but finely marked; the eyes of a very dark blue; the complexion less tanned with sun; the hair several shades lighter: altogether, he is a man to whom nature has given more than the average share of good looks. To say that a man has regular features and dark-blue eyes, is not necessarily to pay him a great compliment; for he may have all this and more, and yet remain a barber's block. But this is not the case here. This man has both vivacity and intelligence, and a certain high polish and fascination of manner which are even better gifts than his face and his figure.

At first sight the resemblance between the two brothers would strike you forcibly, but after an hour in their society you would have found it difficult to define what made them appear alike at first. It was only that indescribable *air de famille* which is so puzzling sometimes.

The conversations going on in the coffee-room are as various as the groups.

"Have you heard," the bald captain is saying, "that the 96th Regiment is likely to be ordered off to Bohemia, to replace the 42d, which, it seems, has made the place too hot to hold it?"

"No, indeed," replies, very emphatically, the small fair dragoon major with the fluffy whiskers—"no, indeed," repeats he in his thin pippy voice; "you must be mistaken, for I have been positively assured that the 69th Regiment is the one destined; and I assure you," he continues, in a slightly piqued tone, as the bald captain

makes a gesture of incredulity, "I have very good authorities for this assertion, although I am not at liberty to mention my source."

"That is precisely the case with me," answers the captain, with a solemn shake of the head,—and both these worthies hereupon drop the subject and relapse into silence; while each, from the expression of concentrated mystery on his face, tries to give the other the impression that he has got his information first-hand from the Minister of War at least, if not from his Majesty himself.

"And so old Tortenfish is going to make a fool of himself in his old days, and marry little Fräulein Korn, who has nothing but her pretty face (she certainly is con-foundedly pretty)," the *blasé* young man is remarking.

"What fools our elders are!" says some one else, complacently; "to let one's self be caught in that manner! Nothing short of a title and three hundred thousand florins would induce *me* to sell my liberty."

"Then I fancy you will have to pass your life in single blessedness," suggests another.

"Well, I rather think so myself; and to tell the truth, I have no great opinion of matrimony, and I think that wives are apt to turn out failures."

"I killed twenty-seven of them last year," comes, in a mournful tone, from the Lancer colonel: "it was a heavy blow, and has been difficult to recover from."

"Is the old savage a Turk in disguise, do you think, Arnold?" whispered the younger of the two brothers, whose name was Otto.

The next minute, however, cleared the gallant colonel's character, as in the course of conversation the words "glanders," "expense of burning," "saddlery," &c., explain the nature of his bereavement. From this de-

pressing subject, the colonel goes on to expatiate upon the various miseries of military men's lives in general, and of cavalry colonels in particular, winding up by assuring his audience that had he a sixpence to bless himself with, he would cut the whole concern.

"Upon my word, Arnold, the old fellow is not wrong there," says Otto, laying aside his cigar; "and if my expedition turns out successful, I shall look sharp about turning my back on the military career, and leave my country to defend itself as best it can without my valuable assistance."

"But, Otto, not longer than two years ago you would not let yourself be persuaded to exchange the life of a soldier for another."

"But that was quite another thing," returns Otto hastily, with some visible confusion. "Of course I have got no taste for vegetating in that humdrum manner in the country; besides, you know that I have not got your practical nature, and should never have managed to make the ends meet in the wonderful way you do. My leaving my career at that time would have been a useless sacrifice. But you would surely not expect a man with half a million in his pocket to go on wearing out his energies in the ungrateful task of pounding recruits and horses into shape, and not being able to take the slightest liberty with his time without getting into hot water? Surely you agree with me?"

"Oh yes, I agree. But first make sure of your half-million."

"Don't croak; I am in high spirits," says the other, unrepressed. "My—I mean our prospects are in a brilliant state. An old lady living in the middle of prairies, with several millions—what is more natural than that she should give some of her superfluous cash to her promising nephews?"

Arnold suggested that the old lady was not a fixture in the prairies, and might take herself and her riches somewhere else; "and besides," he added, "she may prefer keeping them to herself."

"Oh, trust me for that; she would need to be made of flint if she does not soften in face of all the tender reminiscences I come armed with—letters and rose-leaves and locks of hair."

"What is that about locks of hair?" exclaimed a cheerful voice close at hand.

Arnold gave Otto a warning look, and in the next moment they were greeting two fellow-officers of Otto's who had come to Vienna for their Easter *Feiertäge*.

A dark flush crossed Otto's face as he rose to welcome his captain and the young lieutenant. That the meeting was not an altogether pleasant one could be gathered from the studious civility with which he made room at the table for his senior officer, while greeting Lieutenant Langenfeld with the careless intimacy usual among good comrades.

Lieutenant Langenfeld does not need much description—he was one of the regular types of his class: every one acquainted with Austrian cavalry officers as they used to be, will know what I mean. Over the middle height, rather slender, and fairly good-looking; a dash of dandyism in his appearance; and in his walk that indescribable something which is elegantly termed "cavalry limp." Besides these general characteristics, Lieutenant Langenfeld had some peculiar to himself. Providence had not overburdened him with brains, but had in return furnished him with an inexhaustible fund of high spirits. Indeed there had only been one occasion, his comrades declared, on which he had been seen in a de-

pressed state of mind: this was when a duel, in which he was to have been engaged, was nipped in the bud by his opponent apologising at the last moment.

"Rather hard lines," he was heard to exclaim despondently to a sympathising listener, "having one's fun cut up in this way. Why, I have not had a duel for a year, not since Kraputchek trod on my terrier's tail; have been thinking of nothing else since yesterday; and now the wretch must needs apologise. Enough to make a man hang himself!"

It was said, however, that two days after, he found consolation by getting into some scrape in company with his late adversary—the two having sworn eternal friendship.

"Now for the locks of hair!" exclaimed the lieutenant cheerfully, as he took a place at the table. "Is it a flaxen curl of the fair Halka which you are taking as a talisman on your journey?"

"No, not that," replied Otto, glancing sharply at the captain, who, leaning back in his chair, was regarding him with inquisitive amusement. "I had not the honour of taking leave of the Countess; my departure was so sudden, and I had so much to do before starting, and—the roads were in such a bad state," continued Otto, blundering on, and forgetting in his confusion that this enumeration of excellent reasons was only weakening the effect he wished to produce.

"All right, my dear fellow," said the captain, with a short laugh, drawling his words out imperceptibly. He had not removed his eyes from Otto's face while the other was stammering his disconnected explanation. "You need not give yourself so much trouble to explain what is quite natural. I found the roads perfectly passable a fortnight

ago when I called there, and the Countess was in wonderful looks; but I think you were quite right in going off without any special adieux,—quite right," he repeated, at last withdrawing his eyes from Otto, and casting a seemingly careless glance into the mirror opposite, where his own half-reclining figure stood out as the principal object in the foreground. Tall, broad, and black-haired, he did not make a bad picture in the glass. A fine man, a very fine man, almost too fine a man for a very refined taste. Neither colouring nor material had been spared in his construction; there was enough and over of both. No one, after a passing glance, could have entertained a doubt that this was a man well to do in the world—a man who had seldom been denied the gratification of a desire—a man who never could have been hungry in his life, and who looked as if he never would be hungry. He walked, ate, and slept in an essentially well-to-do, rich manner, never for a moment forgetting that he was rich, and never letting any one else forget it.

Looking at the two reflections near each other in the glass, that of Otto appeared almost pale and weak beside the captain; and yet no woman in her senses would hesitate for a moment between the two—for while that high-bred profile and intense blue eyes could hardly fail to captivate any woman's imagination, the coarser beauty of the other appealed only to the senses. Beautiful he was, but not a type of manly beauty. You could not call him more than a beautiful animal.

"Ha!" said Captain Kreislich, turning from the glass with a slight movement of interest; for beside the reflection of his own features he had caught sight of Otto's face darkened with the rage which his last words had awakened.

"What do you mean?" Otto began, making a movement as if to rise to his feet, his voice shaking with ill-suppressed fury.

"Nonsense, Otto!" interrupted Arnold quickly, giving his brother a glance which did not fail in its effect; for Otto, with an evident effort, leant back and was silent.

"Nonsense!" echoed Langenfeld, bursting into the conversation. "Of course, Bodenbach, if you choose to go off rushing to such an unheard-of place as Mexico, without the usual ceremonies of leave-taking, and without any explanations, people will explain for themselves; and you have only yourself to thank if the explanations are wrong."

"And pray, what sort of motives have people been kind enough to invent for me?"

"Oh, all sorts of things; you know the usual Jews and debts and difficulties. Of course," he went on, seeing a cloud on Otto's face, "I flatly contradicted this report, and invariably declared that you were going to Mexico to take possession of an immense fortune, although some inquiring spirits suggested that in this case Arnold, being unfettered by military duties, would be the most likely man for the expedition."

Langenfeld watched the effect of these words on his comrade, for he was indeed dying with curiosity as to the object of this voyage; and had the others not been present, it is probable he would have taxed his friend point-blank with the question. He was puzzled now. Otto certainly had winced at the beginning of the conversation; but again, at reference to the fortune, he had cast a glance that looked very like triumph at the captain opposite.

The captain was sitting up in his chair now with evidences of interest

in his face. The conversation was promising some excitement. He drew a little nearer to the table, and when he spoke this time he did not drawl.

"Mexico! ah yes, Mexico is a long way off; not a country I should care to visit myself. Do you intend remaining there?"

"I daresay you would like it if I did," muttered Otto between his teeth; but aloud he only said, "I don't know what my plans will be—they are not settled yet."

"Perhaps you mean to go into the Mexican army," put in Langenfeld. "Wouldn't I like to be in your place! Lots of big game to kill: buffaloes, and crocodiles, and brigands, and so on in charming variety. Surely you will not be fool enough to return to riding-schools and recruits after that!"

Arnold here interrupted. "We are not at liberty to satisfy your curiosity. You are quite right, however, in contradicting any report of my brother being obliged to leave Austria. It is merely a family matter: he is going by his own choice, and will, I trust, soon be back again."

Langenfeld, who was rather in awe of Arnold, immediately changed the subject.

"By the by, Bodenbach," he said, presently, "are you really going to take that entertaining creature Piotr with you? He is the very last article I should dream of dragging to Mexico. Why, you will have to publish a volume of anecdotes on your return."

"Yes, Piotr is going," said Arnold; "not that he will be very useful, but at any rate he will do for companionship."

"Perhaps," suggested Langenfeld, with a grin, "we shall, a few months hence, be surprised by seeing Piotr walking in on one leg, and incoherently breaking to us the

pleasant news that he has lost the urn containing his master's remains *en route*; you, Bodenbach, having managed to get yourself scalped by the Red Indians for the sake of the nuggets with which you were laden. Oho! I am getting on to forbidden ground again: let us talk of something else. Let me see; what is a safe subject?" with a desperate glance round the room.

"The weather," suggested Arnold, decidedly; "tell us what it was like in Poland."

"The weather! that's just it; a capital subject. You ought to be surprised to see me here alive; I don't yet understand how I escaped being drowned in the mud. And the expense of the thing too! I ruined my best uniform-coat the last time I rode out to Snyhinee, and I have been petitioning the captain to buy stilts for the squadron; but he won't listen to reason."

"Wouldn't the stilts come more expensive in the end?" asked Arnold.

"Not near as expensive as the quantity of boots they destroy; but *à propos de bottes*," exclaimed he, breaking off with a sudden recollection and turning to Otto, "have you been to the *Wieden* to see '*Drei Paar Schuhe*'? Not!"

he went on excitedly, as Otto shook his head. "Surely, my dear fellow, you do not contemplate leaving Europe without repairing that deficiency? and I must absolutely drag you there to-night. It will be the fourth time I hear it, and I assure you Geistinger excels herself. Of course Arnold will not leave us in the lurch."

"I have just taken a box for this evening," interposed Captain Kreislich, relapsing into his habitual drawl, and turning more especially to Otto with an air of patronage which called back the frown on his face. "If any of you choose to avail yourself of it——" but his phrase was cut short.

"You are very kind," interrupted Otto, "but I never go into a box when I can help it; I should be sorry to trouble you: I infinitely prefer the pit. Langenfeld, I am with you."

"Just as you please," returned the captain. And as the little circle was broken up and the men rose to go their different ways, a bystander would needs have been blind not to see that those two, who parted so civilly and seemingly so coolly, were deadly enemies, and that the glance with which they measured each other was a glance of hatred.

CHAPTER II.—A FAMILY TREE.

"Said Gama: 'We remember love ourselves
In our sweet youth.'"

—TENNYSON: *The Princess*.

Paragraph reprinted from a Mexican paper:—

"The rich Mr Maximilian Boden, who died lately in the neighbourhood of the town of G——, at the age of seventy-four, is, it is understood, really called Bodenbach, and is nearly related to the baronial

family of that name in Austria. This gentleman had curtailed his name in the aforesaid fashion, previous to the making of his large fortune, amounting to several millions, which he has bequeathed to his only daughter, Miss Olivia Boden, or rather Baroness Olivia Bodenbach."

Not being fond of needless mysteries, I will now explain the connection of this paragraph with my story, as well as whatever may require elucidation in the foregoing chapter.

Baron Walther Bodenbach, father of Arnold and Otto, was a gentleman of good old German family, though of much-dilapidated fortunes. His ancestors had been possessed of considerable property; but thanks to gambling and bad management, this had dwindled down by degrees. The grandfather of the present proprietor, old Baron Arnold Bodenbach, had still further hastened the downfall of his estate, by departing from the hitherto prevalent rule in the family, of leaving the property to the eldest, and by dividing it between his two sons, Felix and Max—the former of whom was the father of the present Baron Walther.

The younger one, Max, handsome and dissipated, had made short work of the paternal acres. He had married when a very young man; his wife died after four years; and by the time he got his portion he was already deeply in debt. For some years he struggled on; but day by day saw his patrimony slipping from him, until finally, in 1838, he found himself obliged to make a rapid retreat into another hemisphere, leaving a considerable amount of unpaid debts behind him. His elder brother Felix had a son, Walther (born 1814), and he himself a daughter, Olivia, five years younger than her cousin; and for some time the notion had been entertained of reuniting the family property in their persons. The young people themselves had taken very kindly to this notion, and some tender passages had passed between them. It was therefore a great blow to them, when one day Felix, having discovered the state of his brother's affairs, peremptorily

ordered his son to think no more of the match. Walther, although very much attached to the fair Olivia, was of a weak, yielding disposition, and allowed himself to be persuaded that his duty to the Bodenbach name demanded that he should retrieve their fortunes by a wealthy marriage, instead of uniting himself to the daughter of his spendthrift uncle.

The brothers parted, therefore, with some coolness, as Max would have preferred pursuing his new fortunes unencumbered by his daughter, whom he would have gladly made over to his nephew. Felix was obdurate in opposing this: but this did not prevent him from satisfying to the best of his power his brother's creditors; he would suffer no stain to rest on the family name.

Max was soon lost sight of by his relations, and in 1844 a vague report of his death had reached Europe.

Walther, according to his father's wishes, married in 1842 the daughter of a rich banker.

It was not without a pang that Felix had consented and even urged his son to this marriage; for hitherto the Bodenbachs had prided themselves much on their purity of blood, and there had been no instance of any one of them taking a *bourgeoise* wife.

A word here about the difference in the system of nobility in England and in Germany. In England the line of demarcation as to the untitled aristocracy is often puzzling. Unless you have the family tree of every individual you meet at your fingers' ends, you have no direct means of ascertaining whether, for instance, a Mr Campbell whom you come across is the great-grandson of a blacksmith or of the Duke of Argyll. Our system of gradual descent always seems to me like

weaning from the title by degrees, as if the shock of coming down all at once to plain Mr —— might be too much for ducal constitutions.

Again, in England you talk about the aristocracy and the gentry, thus putting the untitled gentry on a lower level, though they may have just as good blood in their veins.

In Germany this is all different; you have only to look at a man's calling-card in order to know what he is, and no mistake is possible. Either he has a title or the prefix of *von* attached to his name, and then he is *adelig* (of noble birth); or he has not, and in that case he belongs to the *Bürger* or *bourgeois* class.

Nowadays nobility, like everything else, has got cheap. Anybody, for instance, having served for thirty years in the Austrian army, can buy his *von* for a round sum of money. Many do not do this, of course, preferring the money to the *von*; and so it comes that they can go about boasting that it was not worth their while to pick up the crown with five points,* which might have been theirs for the stooping (and the money). Rich bankers also, and rich men in general, are often invested with the rank of nobility: but this banker in particular, Baron Walther's father-in-law, had not been raised from his original class; and thus, in order to retrieve the family fortunes, Walther was the first Bodenbach who married beneath himself.

But even a banker for a father-in-law is not always a safeguard against poverty; it did not prove so, at any rate, in this case. The bank failed, and Baroness Bodenbach's fortune perished with the rest. So, by the time his sons were grown up, Walther was a very poor man indeed, possessing only a small

estate of the name of Steinbühl, together with a farm in Styria, and barely sufficient means to keep this up with tolerable comfort. Baroness Bodenbach had died of consumption when her youngest child, Gabrielle, was two years old.

In 1870, two years before this story opens, Baron Walther's health was so evidently failing, that it became clear he could no longer manage even the small property by himself, and required the help of one of his sons. Both of these were in the Austrian army, serving in cavalry regiments. His first thought had been to withdraw his younger son from the service: Otto was by no means a very hard-working soldier; while Arnold, having just attained his captaincy, after a brilliantly sustained examination, seemed on the way to make a career, which the father was unwilling to disturb. However, *le père propose et le fils dispose*, as is too often in these days. When the proposition was laid before Otto, he chose to consider himself ill-used, and could not be persuaded to meet his father's wishes. From the way in which he resented the idea, one would have supposed that in him slumbered the spirit of a Napoleon, destined one day to save his country, and that it would have been a positive injury to the nation to withdraw him from the martial ranks. Not that Otto was passionately attached to the military career, the hardships and deprivations of which, in his mind, greatly outweighed the glory; but he foresaw that the change would in no way bring him advantage, and would be less congenial to his tastes than even his present occupation. But Otto did not intend to pass his life this way; his great scheme was to marry

* The lowest order of nobility in Germany and Austria have in their arms a crown with five points; a baron has seven, and a count nine points.

richly, and then throw off his military fetters and live at his ease. He would have no fortune of his own; but with his share of good looks, the fulfilment of his hopes did not seem unlikely.

Otto proving intractable, then, Arnold had to throw up, for a time at least, his profession. He left the army, keeping only his title of captain, and the right to re-enter at any future period or in case of war.

Such was the state of things in the autumn of 1871, when one day, as Baron Walther was breakfasting with his daughter Gabrielle, Arnold, who had ridden over to the neighbouring town early that morning, entered in a rather more excited manner than was his wont.

"Good morning, father. How are you, Gabrielle?"

"What is the news?" inquired the old man; "you look as if something particular had occurred."

"Here is something that will make you stare," said Arnold, drawing a newspaper from his pocket and unfolding it. He pointed to the paragraph which has been quoted at the beginning of this chapter. The paper was an obscure local one, and the paragraph in question was reprinted from a Mexican journal.

"What do you make of it? Surely it can be no other than your uncle Max? the age tallies exactly."

Apparently the old Baron could not make much of it: he got flurried, and stared at the paper in bewilderment—his mind utterly confused by this new idea being suddenly brought before him.

"Do not speak so quick, Arnold. Dear me! surely uncle Max is not dead again? Why, then, he must be alive, after all. Let me see—no; can't you help me to understand it all?"

Gabrielle, who had only under-

stood that somebody was dead, here began to cry, according to her invariable habit, when anything out of the common occurred.

"Don't be silly, Gabrielle; there is nothing to cry about," said Arnold, impatiently. Then to his father: "I don't think it is very difficult to understand; uncle Max is dead, *quite* dead," he added, emphatically; "but he only died a few months ago, instead of thirty years ago, as we have always supposed on very insufficient grounds; and he has left all his money to his daughter."

"But he never had any money. I don't think it can be him, after all. Are you certain it is him, Arnold?"

"No, I am not certain, of course—it is only a conjecture; but it seems to me not unlikely. Uncle Max would not be the first person, besides, who has made a fortune for himself; although I have no doubt the reports are exaggerated."

"So he has made a fortune, then; and you say he has left it to his daughter?"

"The paper says so, at least. You must remember her, of course. How old can she be now, I wonder?"

"Dear me! Why, that is Livia. Of course, of course. Much about Gabrielle's age, I should think. Not exactly that either," he added, mournfully; "for that was thirty-two years ago, and I suppose she has got older."

"I suppose so," said Arnold, drily.

"And she has remained unmarried. I wonder why, and whether she ever thinks of old times. So she is rich too," the old man went on, having finally mastered the subject.

"Who is rich?" asked Gabrielle, drying her tears. "I don't understand what it is all about."

"The daughter of grandpapa's brother Max," began Arnold, but his father interrupted him.

"No, no, that is not the way. You will never make her understand. I will make it out on paper for her."

"There is nothing to make out that I can see; the matter is as simple as possible."

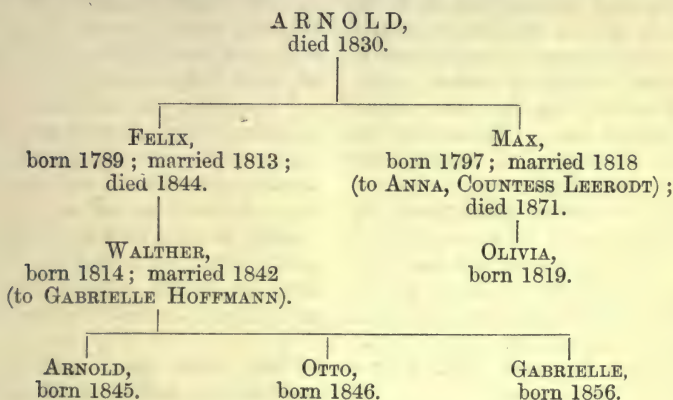
The old Baron, however, was persistent; and as Gabrielle had certainly not understood her brother's explanation, Baron Walther got a large sheet of paper, on which

he made out the thing for his own satisfaction, as well as for his daughter's enlightenment.

"How far back shall I go, Arnold? I think, to make it *quite* clear, it would be best to begin with my grandfather's great-grandfather, who was born in 1660."

"For heaven's sake, no, father! If you will make out this family tree, better begin with your grandfather; the estate was never divided till then."

Here is the result of the Baron's work:—



For the next few days nothing was talked of but this wonderful news. It was viewed in every possible light, and worn almost threadbare with constant discussion. The Baron employed himself in hunting up from drawers and boxes a miscellaneous collection of objects, which had once been the property of his fair cousin Olivia,—a white kid glove; a packet of dead rose-leaves; a roll of music (old songs of hers); and, finally, a chalk-sketch, very much out of drawing, representing a young lady, very much out of date, with a wasp-like waist, smooth bands of hair that shone like a mirror, a pair of black arched eyebrows, and a self-satisfied smile on her face. These several treasures

he displayed to his son, and assured him, at great length, that he had never known a moment's peace or happiness since he parted from his cousin. Arnold thought to himself that his father seemed to have got on wonderfully well without peace or happiness; but he humoured the old man's fancies, and tried to listen to his long-winded stories.

In the meantime, however, his own thoughts were taking a more practical turn. This strange piece of news, which had come to them in a roundabout way through the papers, might, of course, prove to be without foundation; but there were as many possibilities in its favour as against it: at any rate, it

was a chance not to be lost, and certainly it was worth while sounding.

This uncle of theirs, who, as it now seemed, had died rich, had been under considerable obligations to their grandfather, who had impoverished himself by his generosity. It was therefore not improbable that his daughter, being wealthy and unmarried, and having perhaps also some tender recollections of her cousin Walther, might be disposed to make up for these losses. The sum lent was in itself not a large one, but in their position a great object; and Arnold felt it to be his duty not to let this unlooked-for chance escape. He proposed to his father to write at once to Olivia, and honestly lay the state of the case before her. There were no means, of course, of proving the debt legally; but it was to be supposed that she would naturally be willing to pay it without any such proofs. But here Arnold met with an unlooked-for obstacle in his father's exaggerated sense of delicacy. Nothing on earth would induce the Baron to write such a letter to his cousin.

"It would never do, Arnold," he exclaimed one day when his son was pressing him hard on this point—"it would really never do. Just consider the delicate position I am in towards her! Any young girl in her place would feel hurt at being asked for money by one who once aspired to her hand."

"But, father, it would surely be madness to let this false delicacy interfere with your asking for what, after all, is your right. Think over it; there are three of us to be provided for. Otto and I can manage for ourselves; but Gabrielle!"

"Yes, to be sure; poor little Gabrielle," answered the father; "but then just fancy, for instance, if any fellow who had wanted to marry Gabrielle twenty years ago

were to write her a begging letter now! How dreadful it would be! What would the poor child do?"

"Begin to cry, of course," unhesitatingly replied Arnold, "if such a curious event were to occur; but then everybody does not go in for tears as plentifully as she does. Let us hope that my aunt Olivia has more strength of mind."

"Of course she has. Olivia is very brave—yes, very brave indeed for a girl; and when you consider that she is only eighteen. I remember——"

"But I don't consider her to be only eighteen," almost shouted Arnold into his father's ear; "she is fifty-two if she is a day."

"Yes, yes, to be sure; I was only forgetting. I see now. What a pity, to be sure! But I wish, Arnold, you would not speak so loud—it confuses one so."

After having, with immense difficulty, wrung an unwilling consent from his father, Arnold sat down and penned the following epistle:—

"MY DEAR AUNT" (I suppose I must address her as aunt; it would hardly do to begin cousining an old lady),—"I hope I am not presuming too much upon the interest which, I trust, you still feel for your only remaining relations, in addressing you thus. My signature will convey no recollection to your mind, as I was not born till eight years after you had left this country; and as you have probably never heard of my existence, I must introduce myself to you as Arnold Bodenbach, your nephew, or, more properly speaking, first cousin once removed, eldest son of Baron Walther Bodenbach, whose name you surely will not have forgotten. It was only last week, through a chance, that we became acquainted with the fact that our father's uncle, Maximilian, whom we had believed

dead since 1844, had lived till within the last six months, and had died possessed of considerable fortune. It is many years now since these two branches of the family have been estranged and lost sight of each other ; but there is no reason why this should continue, and I venture to hope that you are as ready as we are to renew our connection.

“ I will not beat about the bush, nor pretend that my motive in addressing you is other than an interested one. You, who of course remember the unfortunate circumstances attending on your departure from Europe, thirty-two years ago, may perhaps have heard that my grandfather, wishing to screen the family name, advanced a sum of five thousand florins, all he could afford, to satisfy the most pressing amongst his brother's creditors. Neither his son nor his grandchildren have ever repented this step, having always regarded it as a matter of course, which admitted of no choice, and that in a question of this kind, between money and the honour of a family name, the former must be unhesitatingly sacrificed. The idea that either your father or his descendants might ever be able to repay the sum alluded to, had never entered into our calculations ; and I need hardly say that the subject would never have been broached, on our side at least, had we not thus accidentally ascertained that you were probably in a position to repay, without inconvenience, a sum which, though trifling in itself, is, I am not ashamed to say, of immense importance to us.

“ Since you left Europe, fortune, which seems to have favoured you, has turned her back on my father. It is doubtful whether we shall be able to retain the only remnant of our family estate, small as it is. My brother Otto and I are serving

in the Austrian cavalry, and will always be able to carve out some sort of a future for ourselves. It is principally for the sake of my father, whose health has long been failing, and for that of my sister Gabrielle, that I am obliged to address you on this subject. My father was very unwilling that you should be importuned about this ; doubtless the former relations in which he stood to you make him feel an excess of delicacy about this matter. I hope you will agree with me that honesty is the best policy in these cases, and not resent my plain speaking.

“ If chance or inclination should bring you to Europe, you will believe, I hope, that we will all be ready to welcome you as our nearest relative.

“ Allow me to sign myself your affectionate though unknown nephew,
“ ARNOLD VON BODENBACH.”

“ That will never do, Arnold ; it is far too dry and stiff,” exclaimed the old Baron, after reading the letter, which his son handed him for perusal ; “ you should have said more about affection, and that I remember her so handsome ; and you might have mentioned the chalk-drawing. Why, this is a mere business letter.”

“ That is exactly what I meant it to be,” replied Arnold. “ If she is a woman of sense, she will not think the worse of me because I do not feign an affection which I cannot possibly feel for an unknown person.”

So Arnold, deaf to his father's remonstrances, folded and sealed his letter, addressing it to Miss Boden, *alias* Baroness Olivia von Bodenbach, under cover to the magistrate of the town of G—— ; and ordering his horse, he set off to register and despatch the writing with his own hands.

CHAPTER III.—“UNCLES IN AMERICA.”

The important news had of course been duly communicated to Otto; but he did not seem disposed to lay much stress upon it, declaring in a *blasé* manner that every one knew what “uncles in America” meant. For once in a way, however, this much-discredited and usually-disbelieved-in relative proved better than his reputation, for in course of time the following eagerly-looked-for answer to Arnold’s letter arrived:—

“MY DEAR NEPHEW,—How time flies, to be sure!” (“Rather a flippant beginning,” interpolated Arnold, who was reading aloud). “Thirty-six years since I left Europe! quite an eternity,—it is so easy to lose count. My delight was great at finding that I have two nephews and a niece, dating since my departure from Austria. I shall only be too delighted to be as good and as useful an aunt to them as I can.

“I believe people have talked a good deal of rubbish about my fortune, but there is some truth at the bottom; for I really have got a great deal of money—more than I know what to do with. The worst is, that I cannot do exactly what I like with it.

“But you are not to suppose that my father was utterly oblivious of his obligations towards his brother. Before his death (in July last) he desired me to make inquiries about his brother’s descendants, and laid me under the obligation of repaying the sum which, he had reason to suppose, had been advanced by his brother.

“The bulk of his fortune he has left to me, his only daughter; but a certain portion he has disposed of otherwise,—but into this I do not wish to enter at present.

“As to my father’s last wishes, you have made my task easier by giving me the clue to your exact whereabouts, which was amissing. I have already taken steps to have the sum in question, as well as the compound interest, repaid through my bankers.

“This is all the business part of my letter, I think. I hope I have expressed myself clearly.

“I am very anxious to make the acquaintance of my nephews and niece; could not something be managed? At my age, you would surely not expect me to cross the ocean in order to visit you; but you, who are, I hope, strong young men, would perhaps manage, at least one of you, to come over and pay a visit to your poor old aunt.

“Of course you will understand that I could not suffer you on that account to incur any expense. If you put yourself out to humour the whim of an old woman, you must at least allow me to do that much.

“I will not touch upon the painful circumstances of my departure from Europe; and I can fully understand the reasons which kept your father silent at present. To me it is still more impossible to allude to that time.

“Good-bye now, my dearest nephews, not forgetting my niece Gabrielle. Please think over my plan, and let me hear soon from you.—Your affectionate old aunt,

“OLIVIA BODENBACH.

“P.S.—I am so glad you are both soldiers; I have a passion for uniforms, especially cavalry.”

A joyful family scene followed the reading of this letter.

“There, that is what I call satisfactory,” said Arnold, laying it

down with a sigh of relief. Gabrielle clapped her hands and danced about. The old Baron positively had tears in his eyes.

"Give me the letter, Arnold. Are you sure there are no more messages in it? She surely might have said more about old times."

"Well, father, you could hardly expect her to begin about that herself," said his son, laughing, "especially as you had shirked writing to her."

"Yes, yes; that is true. I must write now. But let me see the letter." Then, as his son handed it to him, "Dear me! I shouldn't have recognised her handwriting. I suppose she has got out of the habit of writing in Mexico."

"The only objection I see to the whole business," said Arnold, "is, that it seems too good to be true; it has all gone as smoothly as a fairy tale. I hope there is not a screw loose somewhere; although, again, I don't see how that can well be. Is it not rather odd, by the by, that an old lady of her age should be so enthusiastic about cavalry officers?"

"Not at all, not at all, I assure you. Dear Olivia always was so affectionate. Of course she is thinking of the time when she saw me as a dragoon."

The old man was now as eager as he had before been unwilling to write, and spent the whole forenoon in covering numberless sheets of paper with beginnings, so that by dinner-time the paper-basket was heaped with these unsuccessful attempts. By evening, however, he had succeeded in producing the following composition:—

"MY DEARLY-BELOVED COUSIN OLIVIA,—I can no longer resist the impulse of my heart, which forces me to address these words to you. Believe me, it was not coldness

which kept me silent before; but how could I tell whether your heart had been as constant in its affection as mine has been, or whether, perhaps, some newer image had not replaced the dream of your youth? But no! How could I for a moment do my Olivia such injustice!

"In your declining to allude to the past, I have the best proof that your feelings are unchanged. Of course you could not discuss this delicate subject with a third person; in this I only recognise your usual tact.

"I need not tell you that life, since your departure, has been to me but a dreary blank. Fate has been very cruel to us; and never can I forget that you ought to have been the mother of my children.

"Nevertheless, I entreat you, in memory of old times, to regard them with maternal affection. It is just like your kindness, wanting to see your nephews. I wonder whether you will trace any resemblance to their unfortunate father? I am sure I would not find you changed since we last parted" (he was going to have said, "that my sons will not find you changed," but corrected this in time), "could I have the happiness to see you now."

"I cannot let both my sons leave me at once; so I shall send my eldest, Arnold, who is at present free from military duties. Otto will perhaps, at some future period, have the pleasure of being introduced to his aunt.

"He might start in April; but we will wait to see whether this time suits you.

"So, dearest Olivia, I will end these lines here; my hand is shaking so, that I cannot trust myself further.—Believe me to be, ever your most truly faithful and loving cousin,

"WALTHER VON BODENBACH.

"P.S.—Do you remember the 25th of June 1837?"

To this Arnold added a few lines thanking his aunt for the speedy remittance of the five thousand florins, and expressing his pleasure at the prospect of his visit to Mexico.

And in truth Arnold was really looking forward to this unexpected change in his monotonous life. He always had had a longing for travel, without the opportunity, or even the prospect, of gratifying this taste. Lately, too, he had been working pretty hard, his father not being able to afford an overseer. His departure was fixed for April, that being the time when he could best be spared; and he only waited for his aunt's final answer before completing his preparations. But his pleasant anticipations were not destined to be realised.

Otto had naturally been kept *au fait* of the Mexican correspondence. Since his first disparaging remarks, he had passed over the subject in contemptuous silence. Arnold, therefore, was not a little surprised, one day towards the end of February, on receiving the following telegram from his brother:—

"Must see you about plans. Implore you to take no steps about Mexico till then. Shall arrive on Tuesday." OTTO.

"Now, Otto, what is this all about? Your telegram nearly frightened my father into a fit. I had the greatest difficulty in pacifying him. He would insist that you were coming home because you were dangerously ill. Would not a letter have done as well?"

It was Tuesday, and the two brothers were driving in the dog-cart from the station towards home.

"Well, the fact is," began Otto,

plunging headlong into the subject, but nevertheless looking rather embarrassed, "I am in a dreadful fix, and you are the only person who can help me out of it."

Arnold did not look much astonished at this beginning.

"I half expected something of this sort, Otto; but I don't see how I in particular should be able to help you out of any fix. Come, let's hear—out with it."

"Promise me first that you will never breathe a word to my father about it."

"I suppose it is imprudent, but I promise."

"Now," said Otto, "I suppose I had better go at it at once; I must get it over before I reach home. The long and the short of it is that I am in debt, and tolerably much so too."

The elder brother did not answer at once, and his expression remained unchanged.

"What is the amount, Otto? Better make a clean breast of it at once."

"Oh, up to my ears, and over them too."

"Well, but that is not very explicit. Cannot you tell me something clearer?"

"If you must know it, between two and three thousand florins," replied Otto, ruefully; "rather nearer the three, in fact."

Here Arnold's expression did change; he gave a long whistle, and then said—

"Nearly three thousand florins! How have you managed that, Otto? If you had been living in Vienna it would be more comprehensible; but in that out-of-the-way hole, Rzeszów—"

"It is not my fault," said Otto, doggedly.

"Whose fault, then?" with a little impatience.

"Whose but that hound's!"

burst out Otto, with a violent gesture and a gleam of suppressed hatred in his eyes.

"Kreislich, I suppose you mean," completed Arnold calmly, instantly recognising Otto's captain under that opprobrious designation. "Come, Otto, be reasonable. You hate the man, I know. I don't care for him myself; but as for ascribing all the evils of your life to him, that is nonsense."

"Of course I hate the man," muttered Otto, drawing a deep hard breath. "But do you call it nonsense entrapping a fellow into making ducks and drakes of his hardly-earned pay at macao?"

"Entrapping?" repeated Arnold.

"Yes. Do you think I could stand by quietly while that great brute is openly boasting of his fortune—openly complaining that he cannot find a second man in the regiment who can afford to gamble with him, and making covert hits at my inability to do so? Yes, mine in particular,—it was me he aimed at. He is my evil genius; he was so, that time five years ago, and he is now,—always in my path."

"And was that enough to entrap you into spending money which you actually did not possess?" Arnold's tone was singularly dry as he spoke.

"Oh, it's all very well for a cold-blooded fellow like you to talk. I have got into the scrape, and the question is how to get out of it. Of course I could not sleep a night in *his* debt—I paid him within an hour of the loss, but I had to raise the money at fifty per cent from the Jews."

"Why did you not tell me sooner?"

"Oh, I always hoped it would come right somehow—Countess Halka, for instance; but things have got to such a crisis now, that

I positively don't know what to do. The old Hebrew (I wish he were at the bottom of the Red Sea) who advanced me the money; has my written word of honour that in five months' time I will have it paid; and should I not be able to do so, you know what that means—court-martial, kicked out of the service, and all the rest of the delightful process," he concluded, grimly.

Arnold looked very grave.

"A pity you did not consider these pleasant consequences sooner."

"Oh, of course; everybody always says that afterwards. For heaven's sake, don't moralise, but help me to get out of the scrape!"

"Well, but what do you want me to do? Do you suppose I have got three thousand florins in my pocket? You know that uncle Max's debt is all gone to pay off those mortgages."

Otto moved uneasily on his seat, and answered his brother's question by another.

"Tell me, Arnold, are you so very much set upon this Mexican expedition?" Arnold was silent for a minute; he began to perceive the direction his brother's thoughts were taking.

"I suppose you mean that you would like to go in my place; is that it, Otto?"

"Well," answered the other, with increasing embarrassment, "that is about it; but of course I should never dream of going if you cared at all about the matter."

"I certainly am very anxious to go, and have been looking forward to it ever since the matter was broached; besides, I cannot see why this would necessarily better your condition. Any money which aunt Olivia may be disposed to give us, will most likely not be till after her death; and if uncle Max has left us anything, it will come

to you just the same. In any case, you know surely that I would do my best for you."

"Of course I know that; but then, you know, it is never the same thing. Everybody has not got the knack of persuading, and I have often been told that I can always manage to get round people."

"In plain language, then, you do not consider my fascinations equal to the task," laughed the elder brother; "eh, Otto?"

"I wish you would not always interpret my ideas so unpleasantly; but you see, you are rather reserved and grave, and all that style of thing, and I don't think old ladies like that."

"No, nor young ones either," replied Arnold, highly amused. He was perfectly aware that in society his brother always outshone him, and never failed to enlist on his side the sympathies of the fair sex; but this knowledge troubled him little.

Next day Arnold announced briefly to his father that Otto was going in his place to Mexico; and the old Baron, who was easily satisfied, asked no inconvenient questions.

Immediately after this decision Otto's spirits rose wonderfully; his

thoughts ran without interruption on the brilliant future that was to be his, when he should return rich from Mexico and marry Countess Halka. He went back to his regiment buoyant with hope, and scarcely able to await the reply which was finally to decide the date of his departure.

Everything went smoothly after this; the expected reply came, and was as satisfactory as ever reply was.

"I shall be delighted," wrote aunt Olivia, "to see whichever of my nephews chooses to come, and can assure him that he will find no cause to regret having done so."

Further on, in alluding to what Baron Walther had said about herself, she wrote: "I was deeply touched at what you said in your letter about old times."

"I will do my best to be a mother to your children, if they will accept me as such. I am looking forward very eagerly to the visit in store for me; it will be a delightful break in my monotonous life—for I always live very quietly, alone with my companion."

The letter concluded with many affectionate protestations, and all the directions necessary.

CHAPTER IV.—PIOTR.

Otto awoke late on the first morning of his voyage; the breakfast-hour was past, and he sat down to a solitary meal in the cabin. He had meant to be up in time to see the last of land; but before he had opened his eyes, the last of land had been seen, and the horizon was nothing but a mass of glittering, dancing green wavelets.

"Please, Herr Oberlieutenant, I have made the tea," said his servant, approaching with the teapot.

"Confoundedly weak it looks!"

exclaimed Otto, as he poured out a little.

"No, please, Herr Oberlieutenant, it is not weak, but only the cabin is too light; that makes it look weak."

"Don't talk rubbish, but go and fetch more tea."

"Please, Herr Oberlieutenant, there isn't any more; I put it all in."

"The whole pound - packet I brought with me, do you mean, you ass?" asked Otto, aghast.

"Oh no, please, it was not nearly a pound, not even an ounce. It was that little parcel in pink paper and with a blue ribbon round it."

"Pink paper and a blue ribbon!" cried Otto, horrified, rising to his feet with a bound and tearing the teapot out of Piotr's hand, which made the servant fairly lose his balance.

One or two gentlemen who were reading papers at the other end of the cabin looked up in surprise.

"Why, those are the dead rose-leaves my father is sending to aunt Olivia! What have you done, you thundering idiot?"

It was too true; Piotr had made tea with the rose-leaves. No wonder it was weak.

"Please, Herr Oberlieutenant, I thought it didn't look like tea; but you told me to look in your portmanteau."

"But I didn't tell you to put the whole contents of my portmanteau into the teapot," growled his master. "You have got me into a nice scrape, with your stupidity. Go and make some proper tea at once, and don't put in my tooth-powder or my soap this time, by way of variety."

Some slight description of Piotr may here not be amiss. He was Otto's Polish soldier-servant, or, more properly speaking, unsoldier-servant, having been appointed to the post of his *Bursch* or *valet* when a raw recruit. Otto had formerly served in a Polish lancer regiment, and when transferred to the hussars, had imported this valuable domestic, whom he had got used to, in spite of his peculiarities. That Piotr had never served, was evident to the most casual observer, so completely was his way of balancing himself from one leg to the other, as well as the ingenious objections he was fond of raising to every order, at variance with the

discipline of military drilling. Otto, however, declared that no amount of drilling would ever have made him stand on both legs at once, like other mortals; but attributed this, and many peculiarities, to his hopeless indecision of character.

Piotr certainly did not seem the sort of servant to take with one to Mexico, especially as, on the smallest provocation, his presence of mind was apt to forsake him entirely. Arnold had at first strongly dissuaded his brother from doing so, principally on account of the unnecessary expense. But Otto had a notion that it looked better to be travelling with a servant, and might make a difference in the eyes of his old relative; besides, he was fond of his comfort.

Piotr was about twenty-three at this time. In appearance he was fair, slight, had wandering blue eyes, with a somewhat vacant expression. When going in or out of a room, he invariably gave one the impression, somehow, that only the merest chance enabled him to hit off the door, and that he might just as well have gone clean through the window or bang against the wall. His two great characteristics were—always to carry twice as much as he could manage comfortably, and his dislike to obey any order on the spot. He would always look round for something else to do first. This last eccentricity seemed to arise from a confused idea that by this method he was economising time.

We are not going to inflict upon the reader a minute account of Otto's first day on board ship, or of any of the other days; nor to weary him with a catalogue of the passengers—of the young ladies whom he flirted with (for of course there were young ladies, and of course he did flirt with some of them)—of the old ladies whom he did not flirt with—of the men

whom he smoked and chatted with; nor yet with a description of the conversations at meals, or a list of the dishes which either agreed or disagreed with the partakers, according to their seafaring capabilities, and to the state of the weather.

On the third day of the voyage the weather became unfavourable to most inexperienced travellers. Comfort was banished from the deck, where Otto was smoking his afternoon cigar; and in a state of some irritation he made his way down-stairs, only to find that he had come from Charybdis to Scylla.

He passed on towards his own cabin, attracted by a monotonous droning sound which seemed to be issuing from it. As he entered the little washing-place outside the cabin, he stumbled over something on the ground, and the monotonous sound came to an abrupt conclusion. On examination, the object on the ground proved to be a pair of legs, which Otto recognised as belonging to his servant. He pulled aside the curtain which partially screened the place, and there lay Piotr at full length, his head resting on a carpet-bag. He was the author of the dismal sound—namely, a Ruthenian hymn, which he was singing by way of a preparation to his, as he thought, rapidly approaching end.

"What, in the name of all that is wonderful, is this about?" exclaimed Otto, stopping short in surprise. "Why are you sprawling here like a starfish, you great hulking donkey?"

"Thank you, Herr Oberlieutenant," began Piotr, in a shaking voice; "you have been a kind master to me, and I am sorry to leave you."

"To leave me! Where the dickens are you going to, you extraordinary ass?"

"To heaven, I hope!" returned Piotr, solemnly, "if God will have mercy on my sins."

"Oh, that is all, is it?" said Otto, in a tone of immense relief, as the state of the case dawned upon him. "I thought there was something really the matter with you. You have made so many false starts in that direction already since I have known you, that I hardly think you are in any immediate danger of getting there. There now, get up this minute, and if you really are squeamish, go away to your berth; but don't lie sprawling here like a living man-trap which unwary travellers must fall into. I suppose I shall have to manage for myself to-night."

Otto did manage for himself that night, and several other nights, before Piotr perfectly recovered the balance of his legs and of his spirits. After that the voyage was prosperous. The days passed for Otto pleasantly enough, between the young ladies before alluded to and his Virginia cigars. He had nothing to complain of; even the loss of aunt Olivia's rose-leaves was remedied by the kindness of a blue-eyed damsel, who bestowed upon him the centre rose of her bouquet, no doubt fondly believing that the precious flower was destined to hold in future a tender place about his person. Whether Otto had given grounds for this belief, I really cannot say.

As they neared the end of the voyage, the weather became magnificent. Sea and sky began to assume that deep blue peculiar to the tropical regions; the pale uncertain stars of our climes had turned into large, glowing orbs.

Within four weeks of his departure, Otto, after turning his back on Vera Cruz, found himself jolting along bad Mexican roads, the discomfort of this mode of locomotion

tion amply balanced by the delight and novelty of the tropical scenery around him. Next day he abandoned the main road and the diligence, exchanging it for a light primitive vehicle which had been sent to meet him.

They drove off on a rough track, leading in the direction of the mountains. The country, as they proceeded further into it, did not belie its promise of beauty. At every turn the scenery appeared more wildly romantic, the vegetation increased in luxuriance and tropical splendour. After the burning heat of the day, the coolness of the evening was delightfully refreshing; and Otto found his drive most enjoyable, until the sudden fall of darkness hid from him the varied panorama.

Having now nothing more to look at, he had ample time to turn his thoughts towards the termination of his journey, which was now so near at hand; to conjure up in his mind images of his unknown relative, and speculate upon their approaching meeting. For the first time he began now to wonder what sort of a person his aunt was, and how he was to greet her.

"I hope it is all right," he reflected. "This must surely be the place. I must try and find out from the driver something about

the old lady that may give me my cue in addressing her."

Otto accordingly attempted some conversation with the man; but he proved unapproachable, speaking only some bad Spanish and the dialect of the country.

"I see there is nothing to be done in this direction," thought Otto, with a sigh; "but I shall soon see for myself, for we cannot be far off now. Arnold did say once that he thought there might be a screw loose somewhere. What if the old lady is a myth, after all, and I have come on a fool's errand?"

The vehicle now turned aside into a smaller branch-road, which seemed, as far as he could judge from the decreased jolting, to be rather better kept.

He saw lights glimmering through the trees, and in another minute they had drawn up before a house, the shape of which he could only dimly discern.

A dog rushed out barking, and an old woman came forward with a lantern. Otto jumped off the vehicle, a little stiff with his long drive; and leaving Piotr to collect his luggage as best he could, he stepped into the house, through the low veranda which jutted out, looking about him curiously in the dark, and saying to himself, mentally, "Now for aunt Olivia!"

CHAPTER V.—AUNT OLIVIA.

If there was a screw loose, it certainly was not visible anywhere.

Otto was shown into a large, roomy apartment, furnished with the utmost simplicity, but with evidence of good taste: the floor covered with matting; the walls and ceiling whitewashed; the furniture, principally low couches and ottomans, all uniformly draped

with a broadly-striped red-and-white linen. Curtains of the same hung over the windows, or rather the doors; for all the windows in this room went down to the ground and opened on to the veranda outside. A hanging-lamp threw a moderate light over these objects; so that, although coming from utter dark-

ness, Otto was not dazzled, and could take in the room at a glance.

Another light, a small reading-lamp, stood on a low table at the further end, placed conveniently beside an arm-chair; this arm-chair occupied by an old lady.

As Otto entered, she rose slowly to her feet, and advanced a step or two to meet him.

"My aunt Olivia, I presume," said Otto, hurrying forward, and taking the old lady's hand, which he raised to his lips. "I am very glad to make your acquaintance; I have heard so much about you from my father."

"Then you are Otto, are you not?" she replied, in a slightly flurried manner; "it is very good of you to come such a distance to see us."

("What the dickens does she mean by *us*?" thought Otto; "does she speak in the plural, like royalty?") He answered aloud, "Not at all, aunt Olivia; it is great kindness on your part having given your nephews such a warm invitation."

By this time Otto was seated, and had leisure to observe the old lady; for old she was, decidedly old—far more so than he had ever been led to expect. "Why, she looks nearer sixty than fifty," reflected Otto.

She was above middle height, and sparely built; a very decided stoop in walking took off something from her stature. Her hair was quite grey, but almost entirely covered by a muslin cap decorated with large frills and tied under her chin. The colour of her complexion inclined to yellow; a slightly receding forehead, and large, mild grey eyes, gave her a very benevolent though somewhat weak-minded expression. Of the eyebrows, which his father had described in glowing terms, there

was not much trace left; but perhaps, to make up for this, there was an unmistakable dark shade over her upper lip, which contrasted most comically with the lackadaisical look pervading the rest of her person. Her dress consisted of a black gown, of some thin, shabby material, which, on very close inspection, showed her bony shoulders and arms through. To remedy this, perhaps, she wore an enormous black-and-white cashmere shawl, draped loosely round her spare person, and supposed to be kept together by a large silver brooch of oriental workmanship, made in the shape of a crescent. The brooch, however, did not seem equal to fulfilling its purpose; apparently it was of a weak, undecided nature, for it never kept closed for more than a minute at a time. Already, on advancing to meet Otto, the faithless crescent had given way; and aunt Olivia, who was flurried, got still further embarrassed by this trifling accident.

"Oh, of course," she said, in answer to Otto. "I am always delighted to see any one who is related to——" here she paused in visible embarrassment.

Otto noticed a rustle in the *portière* curtains which veiled the entrance of the next room, and almost thought that he heard a slight cough behind them.

"No, I did not mean that," she corrected; "but, of course, I have heard so much about you from——from——everybody, and it is only natural for me to——" here the old lady looked helplessly round, and Otto thought to himself, "What a rum old girl she is! She almost seems to be begging my pardon for taking an interest in me; and how agitated she gets at any allusion to my father!"

Suddenly his attention was again

attracted by a movement of the curtain. He felt certain that somebody was watching him from behind it; he could even see the grasp of a hand among the folds. The idea of being watched is never a pleasant one, and Otto began to feel strangely uneasy. It was a relief when the maid-servant came in and announced supper; and rising with alacrity, he offered his arm to aunt Olivia, and as he did so he fancied that he heard light footsteps receding from the curtain.

"I daresay you are quite ready for your food, after your long drive. Are you not famished? And I have not yet introduced you to the other lady who—lives with me."

Just as they approached the curtain which divided the two rooms, the unlucky shawl came down again, and the old lady stumbled over it and got flurried.

"I shall be delighted to make her acquaintance," said Otto aloud, while carefully picking up the shawl. What he said to himself was, "Hang it! I had quite forgotten that there was a second old hag in the house."

He pushed the curtain aside, and they entered the adjoining room, where supper was laid. A large urn steamed away on a side-table, and bending over it, with her back towards them as they entered, was the slight figure of a lady, also in black. This could not be the companion, surely, for she looked quite young. Even before she had turned, Otto was struck with a certain grace in the attitude of the bending figure.

She did not look round as they entered; rather she seemed to bend a shade lower over her urn.

"Reata, my dear, allow me to introduce to you Baron Otto Bodenbach, my—nephew; this is Fräulein

Reata, my—companion." She certainly seemed to find a difficulty in finishing her phrases.

The young girl turned quickly round and gave Otto a hasty little bow and a furtive glance, and then returned to her occupation of making tea, without a word.

That one moment was to Otto a revelation; a sudden vision of beauty had been before him. He had met the gaze of a pair of magnificent eyes—dark, deep eyes, that were yet not black. He was positively startled out of his presence of mind, so different was she from what he had expected, so far more lovely than any woman he had ever known. His usual readiness of speech deserted him for a moment, and feeling that if he spoke he would probably betray his astonishment, he wisely remained silent and took his place at the table. There was a substantial supper laid out there, and Otto felt inclined to do justice to it.

Fräulein Reata left the urn suddenly and took her place.

"Reata, my dear, will you give us some tea? Baron Bodenbach—Otto, I mean—will be quite ready for it after his long drive."

Reata poured out the tea silently, and handed a cup each to aunt Olivia and to Otto.

He had a good view of her now, sitting directly under the lamp. The bright colour in her cheeks, which his first glance had shown him, had faded—indeed her face was almost pale when in repose; a delicate, creamy skin, which varied every moment in complexion—showing a hundred changes and tints, crimsoning and whitening with every movement, almost with every breath she drew. Eyebrows and eyelashes were quite black; the hair only a shade lighter—the very darkest brown—and hung in two thick plaits till far past her

waist. Nose and mouth were exquisitely shaped; the latter, perhaps, too firmly set—without, however, any of that squareness of jaw which is so ugly in a woman. Whatever there was of determination about the lower part of the face, was contradicted by the wonderful softness of the eyes—those wondrous eyes, which in their dark shades and golden lights, and their milky, blue-white tint, reminded one of the rich, melting colour of an onyx; but even these eyes, one fancied, could look fierce, if roused.

If a sculptor could have found one or two small imperfections in her features, there were certainly none to be found in her figure; a little above middle height, perfectly proportioned in every way—it delighted the eye to rest upon such faultless lines.

During the greatest part of their meal the young lady maintained an unbroken silence: only, now and then, Otto caught her dark eyes fixed on his face with a scrutinising gaze; and each time she turned away her head and looked confused.

"Those were the eyes that watched me through the curtain," reflected Otto; "no wonder I felt uncomfortable under their gaze. I wish she would speak!"

"It is such a relief to my mind that you have arrived safe," the old lady said. "I have been all day in a state of alarm, for fear that something should happen to you."

"Why, what could happen to me, beyond the vehicle upsetting?" asked Otto. "I must confess that I did expect that once or twice."

"Oh, I daresay; but nobody thinks anything of that here: it would need to be a much graver occurrence to deserve the name of accident."

"What sort of horrors have I escaped, then? I should like to

know, in order to estimate exactly how much gratitude I owe Providence."

"Being cut up into small pieces, salted, and put into a barrel, and perhaps eaten as pickled pork," put in Fräulein Reata, speaking very quick. This was her first attempt at conversation.

"It sounds rather formidable, certainly," answered Otto, bewildered by this unexpected address. "Why, what would have been the inducement?"

"Do you think I am inventing stories to frighten you?" returned Reata, colouring and speaking eagerly, almost rather angrily. "I tell you it is quite true."

"I am ready to believe anything, I am sure," said Otto, beginning to feel amused; "but you will find it rather difficult to convince me that I have been cut up and salted; at least, if such is the case, the results are rather pleasant than otherwise."

"I didn't say you had been, but that you might have been, and I daresay you still will be."

("What an odd girl!" Otto thought to himself; "and how fierce her eyes can look!") "But will you please enlighten me," he continued, "as to who and where my would-be murderers are?"

"Have you never heard of the robbers who infest this part of the country? Last year they disposed of a rich merchant in that way."

"Oh dear, yes!" put in aunt Olivia; "I remember how frightened we all were! I am sure I couldn't sleep a wink until we heard that the head of the band was taken."

"But they let him out again very soon," completed Reata; "so that he is still at liberty to pursue his system of pickling."

"Let him out again?" asked Otto, in surprise; "you don't mean to say that they were fools enough to

let such a bloodthirsty wretch slip through their fingers?"

"There were extenuating circumstances found," replied Reata, gravely.

"What, in heaven's name, could extenuate such a crime?" Otto cried, excitedly; "cutting a fellow-being up into pieces! Was the man insane, or did he do it in his sleep, or did he not do it at all? or what?"

"No, those were not the reasons," Reata returned, still demurely; "but, you see—the pieces were *very* small."

Otto looked at her in astonishment: her tone had been quite serious; but a slight twitching in the corners of her mouth betrayed her.

"Oh, Reata, my dear, how can you talk such nonsense!" exclaimed the old lady. "The fact is," she said, turning to Otto, "that it would not have been safe to hang him; the whole band would have been drawn upon those who executed this act. In this way, at least, they saved their own lives. Justice is very far back in this country."

"But you must live in continual fear of your lives. Does any one ever reach the natural term of existence in these parts?"

"Oh, but we are insured," promptly replied Reata. Then, seeing Otto's surprised look, she went on to explain that it was customary to pay a certain yearly tribute to the brigands, who only exact this from well-to-do people; and that therefore nobody need be murdered unless they liked, and the poor were quite safe from the robbers.

"Your precious life was not in any real danger," she concluded; "for, of course, they would have recognised the servant and horses. I did not feel in the least alarmed about you; it was only that absurd,

dear old Gi—— I mean your aunt, who worked herself up into a state of misery."

"Of course I know I have no claim on your interest," was the answer, in a tone of slight pique. Somehow it mortified him to think that those onyx-coloured eyes had not looked out anxiously for his safe arrival. "I am quite contented if my aunt Olivia" (here a slight bow towards the old lady) "is good enough to care about my welfare."

He had spoken gravely and rather pompously, but the effect of his words on Reata was very different from what he expected. She tried to make an answer, but apparently failed; and partially hiding her face in her handkerchief, she rose abruptly from her place, seized the teapot, and turned towards the side-table, where she bent over the urn. Otto would have sworn that she was laughing, from the movement of her shoulders, and from a slight choking sound which she could not entirely suppress.

What a strange girl she was! and what had there been to provoke her merriment? Otto felt almost some resentment against her,—he could not explain why.

After a minute she turned round and said, "Will you have another cup of tea, Baron Bodenbach?"

She was now looking quite grave; her eyes bent down demurely, no signs of merriment remaining.

A few minutes later Reata rose suddenly and said, "Now, we are all going to bed."

Having the matter decided for them in this peremptory fashion, Otto and aunt Olivia followed Reata submissively.

The room which Otto was shown into as his bed-room was small, and very simply furnished; it looked cool and comfortable. His bed was unlike any he had ever before seen,

consisting of broad, flat leather straps, tightly stretched on a wooden framework, and covered with a thin linen sheet. This is the sort of mattress most in use in Mexico, the climate rendering an ordinary mattress unbearable.

"Good night," said the old lady, extending her hand to Otto.

"Good night, my dear aunt," he replied, kissing her hand.

Reata also had partially extended hers towards him, but suddenly drew it back; and as if to make amends for her *empressement*, she quickly put both her hands behind her back, and said hurriedly and demurely, "Good night, Baron Bodenbach."

Otto opened the door for the ladies to pass, and for the fourth time that evening picked up his aunt's cashmere shawl, which, during the last two minutes, had been gradually slipping down.

When left alone for the night, he could not prevent his thoughts from running continually on the beautiful Reata. It was not merely that her beauty had made a deep impression on him, as it certainly had; but there was something strange and not altogether pleasant in the manner in which she dominated over her mistress. Aunt Olivia seemed entirely in the girl's

power, and, oddly enough, she did not seem to mind it.

"She must be trying to wheedle the old lady out of her money, and that is what made her manner so short to me. However, she shows her game so plainly that I am on my guard, and shall take care of my own interests. She certainly is a marvellously beautiful creature; and if she had to do with an old gentleman, instead of an old lady, my chances would be much worse than they are. What an odd name 'Reata' is! I have never seen such splendid eyes—think I prefer blue ones." Here Otto fell asleep.

This had been an exciting day for him, and his slumbers were profound that night.

Reata, in spite of the announcement of her resolution of going at once to bed, sat up for some time longer in the old lady's room, both talking earnestly with lowered voices.

"It has always been that way with you since you were a baby," sighed the old lady, when Reata at last rose to go.

"And it will probably always be like that with me till the end of time," laughed Reata, as she kissed the old lady and was off to her own room.

CHAPTER VI.—DEAD ROSE-LEAVES.

"Round her eyes her tresses fell,
Which were blackest none could tell;
But long lashes veiled the light,
That had else been all too bright.
And her hat with shady brim,
Made her tressy forehead dim."

—THOMAS HOOD.

"Come along, my own precious Camel! Why are you behaving in such a ridiculous manner, my priceless Porcupine? Oh, I see, you have got a cactus-leaf sticking to your tail! Had it hurt its little

stump of a tail? Give a paw, white Puppy, and I will take it off; and the bright Puppy must give a paw too. Now it is all right again, my old Camel, is it not? And we will have a nice

walk together. Come along, Fícha, Fícha, Fícha?"

This dialogue, or rather monologue, was the first thing that greeted Otto's ears on awaking next morning. His bed was near the window, which to all intents and purposes was open, having only a close wire network stretched across it. Raising himself on his elbow, he pulled aside a piece of the linen blind and peeped out. It was broad daylight, although still very early. He uttered an exclamation of admiring surprise at the magnificent view unrolled before him. The house stood on some slightly rising ground within the forest, the trees in front severed by a deep, cool glade, through which a glimpse of a splendidly smooth plain caught the eye—a strong contrast between the dark shadows of the trees and the unbroken sunshine on the level ground beyond. At one side, and at the back of the house, the forest was dense, and stretched away for several miles.

After casting a hasty glance of admiration over the scenery, Otto looked round to find out whose voice he had heard talking in that strange manner, and what animals might be his or her companions. He was only just in time to see Reata run out of the veranda and disappear under the trees. Of all the animals she had enumerated, there was only visible a rather long-haired insignificant white terrier, which followed closely at her heels. She looked surpassingly lovely (at least Otto thought so) in her white dress, plain black sash, and broad leaf-hat. He followed her with his eyes as long as he could perceive a glimmer of white amongst the trees, admiring her light, springing step, and the perfection of grace in every movement.

Before this he had been anxious

to examine the house and its surroundings, which looked so invitingly picturesque from here; and the vision which he had seen was an additional inducement to make haste with his toilet. He strolled out of the house to view the surroundings. The building was long and low, with a shady veranda, overhung by creepers, running round the four sides. All the windows opened on to it like doors, and thus a perpetual state of ventilation was entertained within the rooms. At a little distance from the back of the house were grouped several small outbuildings, apparently inhabited by farm-servants. Further to the left there was a clearing in the trees; and here, in an enclosed space, ten or eleven horses were grazing or lying in the shade. This sight rejoiced Otto's heart. He looked nearer, and was rejoiced further; for at the far end of the paddock he caught sight of a roan, which even at this distance promised well—conspicuously superior to its companions in the paddock.

As he walked back to the house, Otto glanced about him and peered into the gloom of the trees, to see if he could not discover any signs of the white dress which he had seen disappear into the forest—but in vain; he saw no white flutter, and entered the house in quest of breakfast—for the morning air had given him a prodigious appetite—and in pleasing anticipation of having his coffee poured out for him by the same fair hand which had given him his tea last night. However, he had to content himself with aunt Olivia's services. Reata had not returned from her morning's wandering.

"Yes, it is a lovely spot," the old lady said, in answer to his loudly-expressed admiration of the scenery. "We will take you out

for a walk to-night ; it is too hot in the day-hours. Reata has explored most of the forest ; she will be our guide. Where can she be straying again ?" she continued, anxiously. "That foolish girl always will stay out so long, and comes back heated and tired."

"Shall I go and look for her ?" asked Otto, rising with wonderful alacrity.

"But I don't know where she is ; she has got all sorts of mysterious haunts in the forest, which even I am not acquainted with. I assure you it would be no good whatever," she continued, seeing in Otto's face that he had not yet relinquished his intention : "you have got no idea how confusing the forests here are ; you would certainly be lost. Reata has a wonderful gift of never losing her way in the most tangled wood, but you are a stranger ; and we don't even know in what direction she went off."

"Oh, but I know exactly ; I watched—at least, I saw her going off."

But search was unnecessary, for at that moment a white form ran past the window, and Reata called in as she passed, "Wait for me ; Fícha and I are quite ready for our breakfast."

Otto's face perhaps betrayed some of the astonishment he felt at the companion's *sans gêne* manner, for the old lady said hastily, "You must not be surprised at the dear child's way of talking. She is so full of life, and we have lived so long together, that I have come to consider her quite as a daughter."

"Yes," mused Otto, inwardly, with a passing feeling of curiosity, "she could not talk with more affection if she were the girl's mother herself."

"She has been long with you, then ?" he asked, suddenly.

"Oh yes ; ever since—that is to

say, for several years," replied the old lady, getting flurried and incoherent.

"Is Fräulein Reata a Mexican ?"

"A Mexican ? Oh no—at least, yes ; there is a mixture of blood in her. Her mother was a Mexican, the daughter of a dispossessed chief." The old lady was speaking in broken phrases, and had half turned her head away.

"And who was her father ? A German, I suppose, from her speaking that language so perfectly."

"Yes—at least, no. I am not sure. Reata had German instructors, but Spanish is her real mother tongue. Ah, there she comes !" in a tone of unmistakable relief.

"You have no idea how delightful it was in the forest !" said Reata, having embraced the old lady effusively and bestowed a rather stiff little bow upon Otto ; "the cactuses are all out."

"I hope you will allow me to accompany you to-night," said Otto ; "my aunt has promised that I shall have a walk in the forest, and I am looking forward to it very much."

"Oh yes, it will be capital fun ; do come," she answered delightedly. "I will show you all sorts of interesting things ; there is a beautiful snake's nest in the long grass, and I saw two or three of those large *abispas*, which I have been looking for so long."

"What sort of animals are those ?"

"They are a large, what you Europeans would call an enormous, insect, about the size of a small humming-bird ; their bodies are bright red, and covered with long hairs ; and if they sting you, you swell up to twice your natural size. One of them nearly settled on the White Puppy's head, but luckily I despatched it with my fan. It would have been dreadful certainly if poor Fícha had come home swol-

len to the size of a Newfoundland dog."

"But are you not afraid of being stung yourself?"

"Oh dear, no!" and she looked at him in astonishment; "what good would it do to be afraid?"

"I suppose you are insured against reptiles and insects, as well as against the brigands," said Otto, laughing.

"But, Reata, my dear, I always told you it was not safe to walk about so much alone," put in the old lady, plaintively. "I have told her so often that it is dangerous," she continued, appealing to Otto.

"Nonsense, you dear old thing!" interrupted Reata; "you know we have fought out that point before; it is no use beginning over again. Those animals won't do me much harm; beasts are always fond of me."

"Have you not got a collection of animals somewhere about the house?" inquired Otto. "This morning at an early hour I heard you apostrophising various species of quadrupeds; but when I looked out, I could see nothing but a small terrier."

"Of course," answered Reata, after a passing look of surprise, "I have got a whole menagerie; you shall have the honour of an introduction when I go to feed them."

"Come and see my wild animals," she said, as they rose from the breakfast-table.

She led the way to the veranda, and called out, "Fícha, Fícha, Fícha? White Puppy, Bright Puppy!"

The insignificant terrier appeared at full gallop from some back, probably culinary, regions.

"Here, Baron Bodenbach," said Reata, seizing Fícha by the front paws, and making the animal stand on its hind-legs, much as one

teaches a child to walk. "Here is the precious Camel, *alias* White Puppy, *alias* Bright Puppy, *alias* Porcupine, *alias* Blossom, *alias* Griffin." At each title Fícha was made to bow low. "Now, what do you think of them? Are they not fine animals?"

"Well, this is rather a come-down," answered Otto, a little ruefully, "after expecting to see dromedaries, and camels, and elephants, and giraffes."

"There *is* a giraffe on the premises," she interrupted him, "but I don't think it would do to introduce you yet."

"I shall be less sanguine about the introduction this time. Judging from the experience I have just had, I suppose the animal will be anything except a giraffe, probably something microscopically small."

Reata laughed—a long, rippling laugh. She did not laugh often with her voice, oftener with her eyes. In spite of her high spirits, she was not given to those frequent peals of merriment which young ladies, both in and out of novels, are so fond of indulging in.

When she had recovered her gravity she said, "The giraffe is a full-grown specimen; but really I am quite grieved at your failing to appreciate the valuable qualities of my beloved Fícha."

"But what on earth induced you to overburden this small quadruped with so many names, to which it can lay no possible claim?"

"I assure you it has the spirit of at least half-a-dozen animals combined in one. Just look at it now, with its back humped in that fashion; isn't it the image of a camel? How can you call it anything else?"

"You must allow, however, that there was some excuse for my not understanding your language."

"Yes, perhaps a little; but you

will understand Fícha and me better when you have seen more of us."

"I hope that will be as much as possible. I am to be allowed to accompany you to your forest, am I not?"

"Oh yes; Fícha and I will take you to the forest—won't we, Porcupine?" apostrophising the now sleeping dog. "And we will show you all the treasures it contains."

"But as yet, you have offered me nothing but snakes' nests and stinging insects; has your forest got nothing pleasanter to produce, Fräulein Reata?"

"Pleasanter! why, there are all sorts of luxuries; humming-birds, and ferns, and mosses, and cactuses, and large pools of water with flowers floating on them, and creepers, and long grass. My forest is exactly like an enchanted wood in a fairy tale."

"And she looks exactly like an enchanted princess in a fairy tale," Otto thought, as he watched her admiringly.

Reata had grown more excited as she proceeded with her description; her cheeks glowed, as she strove to impart some of her enthusiasm to her companion. It was a distinctive feature in her character that she could not talk on any subject, however trifling in itself, without putting her whole soul into the matter. To her it was an impossibility to discuss anything with languor or indifference; if she felt no interest in the topic, she would feign none, and simply be silent. What Otto had last night mistaken for ferocity, was only this natural vigour of thought and speech, which then was new to him, but which he now began to understand better.

"I am losing all my time," Reata said, abruptly; "I have got a great deal to do, and I am sure you have. Hadn't you better go

to your room? You must have letters to write, or something to do; and besides, I fancy that your servant is in want of advice, for in passing down the passage I saw him arranging your boots neatly inside the shower-bath. I did not venture to interfere, for I don't know your habits well enough; damp *chaussure* might be your weakness?"

"No, it certainly is not: thank you for the information;" and Otto went off to his room to control Piotr's movements.

Later in the afternoon he had some more conversation with the old lady, and learnt several particulars about their habits and mode of life here. The information gained resulted in the following particulars: This country place, or *hacienda*, though it had long been the property of Maximilian Bodenbach, had been little inhabited by him. Maximilian had led a secluded life in his last years, and kept his establishment on the smallest footing, disliking many servants about the house. Since his death the establishment had not been reorganised; the servants brought to this *hacienda* consisted only of one indoor maid-servant, and the three or four stable-servants requisite for the attendance of the carriage-horses, which in that part of the country were a positive necessity.

It did not surprise Otto that his aunt should in her conversation be continually recurring to Reata—dwelling on the subject with great fondness and affection, and seemingly anxious to know whether the girl's abrupt manner at times had not impressed Otto unfavourably. He was more than ever confirmed in the belief that his aunt intended to provide generously for her companion; but, strange to say, the feeling of resentment against Reata, which this idea had inspired him

with last night, had completely vanished : there could be no better way of employing money, he thought, than by bestowing it on such a perfect being.

Then they went on to talk of his relations: the old lady inquired very kindly after Arnold and Gabrielle, and showed interest in Otto's account. At the mention of Baron Bodenbach, however, or at any allusion to former times, she became at once flurried in the same unaccountable manner Otto had noticed last night ; and when at last he rose, saying that he would fetch his father's letter and the little packet he had been intrusted with, her distress became apparently insurmountable, and she entreated him to put it off till later.

"My eyes are so weak," she said, "I could not read it by myself ; indeed I think it would be better if you give it me after dinner, when Reata is with me—she always reads my letters aloud."

"Very well, my dear aunt ; just as you like," and Otto reseated himself, but had to rise again at once, as dinner was announced to be ready by Reata putting her head in at the door and saying, "*La comida es en la mesa.*"

"Here is the letter, aunt Olivia," he said, after dinner, returning from his room. "I was also to give you this small packet from my father. I daresay you know what it contains."

"Of course she does ; she has been thinking of nothing else," answered Reata, promptly. "Please give me the letter and the packet, Baron Bodenbach ; I will read it first, and dole out as much as I consider to be good for the dear old thing's constitution. Oh no, don't go away," as Otto made a movement towards effacing himself, thinking that his presence might be undesirable. "I assure you she does

not mind it in the least. Sit down there and listen."

As the old lady made no objections to this rather odd arrangement beyond a resigned sigh, Reata sat down with the packet of rose-leaves on her lap, and began reading the letter.

"My well-beloved Cousin Olivia!" Reata glanced significantly at the old lady, who gave a sort of gasp and blushed painfully. "'You will get these lines from the hand of my son, who, more fortunate than myself, will soon have the happiness of beholding again your dear face, and imprinting a filial kiss on your small, white hand.'" Here the old lady made a desperate effort to hide both her hands under her shawl. Reata frowned and went on :—

"I think you cannot fail to recognise in Otto's face the same blue eyes which thirty-two years ago gazed at you with such adoring admiration. He is considered to be very like me, especially in profile."

"Baron Bodenbach," Reata said, laying down the letter for a minute, "please put yourself in profile, and put on an expression of adoring admiration."

"Whom am I to adore?" he asked, looking straight at Reata.

"Your aunt, of course. No, that will not do at all," as Otto distorted his features into what he considered to be the right expression, but which in reality was nothing but a hideous grimace. "I don't think you remind your aunt at all of what your father was like ; now, does he?"

"Now, Reata, my dear, how can you torment me so ! you know how bad my memory is."

But Reata only shook her head and proceeded :—

"I have intrusted him with a precious packet, which he is to give into your hands ; it is the dried

rose-leaves which you gave me on the 25th of June 1837. Of course you remember that day, although you would not allude to it in a former letter. Do you remember the moonlight, and the waterfall, and the nightingale? You threw one rose into the rushing waters and gave me the other to keep."

"How dreadfully frivolous!" said Reata, gravely shaking her head. "I had no notion that you had gone through such romantic episodes. She does not look like it; does she, Baron Bodenbach?" Then as the old lady endeavoured to speak, "No, no, don't excuse yourself; I know exactly what you were going to say, and I make every allowance for your youth and foolishness. There is more about the roses coming."

"Our lives have been parted like those two flowers—one swallowed up in the foaming torrent of life, the other shrivelled and dried."

"Let me see," said Reata, looking critically at the old lady; "are you the shrivelled and dried one, or have you been swallowed up in a foaming torrent? I can't quite make out. There now," tossing the letter across—"there is lots more in the same style; you had better finish it, while I examine these precious petals. Of course you will recognise them at once. Tell me, first, what colour are they? Was the rose of a deep blushing red, or white as the driven snow? You surely can't have forgotten."

"But, Reata, my dear," began aunt Olivia, in painful embarrassment, "my memory is so bad, how can I?"

"Yes, you can, you must," answered her questioner. "Now let us hear, was it white or red?"

"Red, I think, my dear," she answered, convulsively, holding her handkerchief before her face.

"Wrong!" was the triumphant

rejoinder, as opening the packet she disclosed the remains of a yellow rose. "How strange," she continued, examining them more closely, "that they should have kept their colour for thirty-five years! they look as if they had been gathered a month ago. Is it not extraordinary, Baron Bodenbach?" glancing up at Otto.

"Very odd, certainly," he returned, hurriedly. "How confoundedly sharp that girl is!" he muttered to himself; "and how odd her manner in this whole business is! and yet my aunt does not resent it."

"Your father must have preserved them very carefully," went on Reata. "I am afraid he is very poetical. I hope you do not take after him mentally as well as outwardly. Are you really so very like him?"

"I must appeal to my aunt for that particular," said Otto, looking towards the old lady, who immediately turned to the window and appeared absorbed in the deciphering of the letter.

"There is a strong family likeness, I believe," went on Otto, discussing his personal appearance with confident coolness; "but the resemblance is much more marked between my uncle Max and myself. I am said to be very like him."

"Are you?" looking across at him with some curiosity. "I should not have thought so; but then you are taller, of course—that makes a difference," she added, inadvertently.

"Taller!" repeated Otto, with a shade of surprise in his tone and look. "I always believed that my uncle Max had been remarkably tall."

"I don't think he was," she said, speaking quicker; "you must be mistaken."

"But I can't be mistaken," he

continued, with increased surprise. "I remember now quite well that we have got the mark of his height cut into one of the door-posts at Steinbühl; it is just Arnold's height too, but I am a little under it."

Reata was bending over the packet of dead rose-leaves, stuffing them back into their paper rather roughly.

"Well, perhaps I am wrong," she said, without looking up; "but I did not know Mr Boden at all; I only saw him once, and he was not standing then."

"How strange! I thought you had known him quite well for several years."

"I hardly knew him," she repeated.

"But have you not been living with my aunt——" he began.

"Never mind about that," she said impatiently, with heightened colour.

"But I should like to clear up the matter about my uncle Max's height," he persisted, half in amusement, half in curiosity. "Perhaps my aunt will be kind enough to pronounce her verdict as to the difference of height between me and my uncle,"—and as he spoke Otto rose, and turning towards aunt Olivia, stood waiting for her decision.

To his surprise he perceived that the embarrassment on Reata's face was reflected on his aunt's countenance with double force. Was she, too, as ignorant as Reata on the subject of Maximilian's length of limbs?

Taking refuge in the depth of her pocket-handkerchief, she muttered something about "old age" and "effect of climate," and turned away abruptly.

"Don't ask her those sort of questions," Reata said in a hurried whisper to Otto, bending nearer towards him, but not looking at him; "your aunt did not—did not

live latterly with her—with her father—with Mr Boden."

"I beg your pardon, I was not aware," said Otto, feeling that he had stumbled upon an agitating subject.

"Now come to our hour of peace," said Reata, turning off the matter. "Have you ever been in a hammock?"

"Yes; at least I have fallen out of one. I bought a twine hammock last year at Vienna. You were supposed to fasten it to a table and chair. I did so, and brought down both the table and chair, and nearly broke my backbone."

"There is no danger of that here," said Reata, leading the way to the part of the veranda which lay on the shady side of the house, facing the forest. "Look how strong they are! They are made by the natives here, who fabricate them out of twisted grasses."

While she was talking, Reata had established herself in her swinging couch—Otto admiring the graceful ease with which she went through this rather difficult evolution. It was now his turn, and after some awkward attempts, he found himself safely landed in his net.

The air was luxurious and soft, and he closed his eyes to enjoy it more thoroughly. In a minute he was roused by Reata speaking.

"Baron Bodenbach, your aunt is dying to hear all about your family."

"But, Reata, my pet, he has been talking to me about them all," said the sleepy voice of aunt Olivia.

"But there must be more to tell; tell us all about your sister. I am so fond of sisters; I wish I had one! Is she dark or fair?"

"Fair."

"How old?"

"Sixteen."

"That is ever so much younger than I am. By the by, Baron Bodenbach, how old are you? We were disputing this morning about your age."

Not since Otto had attained to man's years had this question been put to him with such point-blank directness. He was startled, but more amused, and answered the truth—namely, that he was twenty-six.

He would have liked to put the same question to Reata. He had been puzzled what age to assign to her; for although developed into perfect womanhood, there was at times a strong dash of childish carelessness about her talk and manner. While Otto was debating the question in his mind, Reata voluntarily supplied the desired information.

"Then you are just five years older than I am; I was twenty-one last June."

Reata was so perfectly unconventional in her ideas, that the thought of making a mystery of her age would never have occurred to her. She had no experience of society, and had read no novels. How could she know that a young lady's age is the one point on which she is allowed—nay, expected—to be silent and deceitful?

"Baron Bodenbach, I think you are falling asleep," remarked Reata, after a pause, filled only by the humming sounds of insects, which the air wafted across from the forest.

"Oh no, not at all; how could

I?" he exclaimed, with the instinctive indignation which such an imputation never fails to rouse in us.

"It is nothing to be ashamed of; we always take a *siesta* after dinner."

"Really! how kind of you!" he said, relapsing into drowsiness. Not even for the pleasure of conversing with Reata could he keep himself awake any longer. From under his half-closed eyelids he could see very little of her now: she had drawn up the sides of her hammock so as to hide her person entirely; and all now left visible was one hand, which held the edges of the net together. Although half plunged in slumber, Otto noticed how beautifully shaped that hand was, not quite as white and small as those of his sister Gabrielle, but with so much character and ableness in its lines.

"I see you are on the verge of going off, and I will leave you in peace directly; but you must first answer some more questions about your sister. Does she draw? Is she fond of riding? and how tall is she?"

The voice coming from the closed hammock sounded like that of some tormenting spirit.

Otto made one more effort, and answered in an indistinct voice, "Immensely!"

"Immensely tall, or immensely fond of riding?" Reata persisted, —but "answer there came none," for Otto had sunk into a delicious state of oblivion.

MY LATEST EXPERIENCE.

THERE is no fact more freely assented to than this, that no one knows to-day what he or she may have to do to-morrow. All know how our most carefully combined plans are violently dislocated by some unexpected circumstance.

When I last left England it was without the least idea that, before I returned to it, I should have to increase my already pretty large acquaintance with *les eaux*, and myself undergo another "cure" in person.

Our compatriots nowadays understand, nearly as well as foreigners, that the "cure" in this sense is not at all the equivalent of the English words "cure" and "cured," but represents only the course of treatment which the patient passes through for a longer or shorter period, according to the orders of that particular Physician of the Bath who is their chosen autocrat for the time being.

In former times I had gone one of a family-party—as such enjoying or suffering together the small incidents of our journeys, according as ease or discomfort predominated; turning the disagreeables into subjects for amusement by the mere force of meeting them in such companionship. When, therefore, on this occasion I was ordered a course of waters, the contrast of the present loneliness, added to my distrust of such treatments, which I had learned to be as powerful for evil as for good, combined to strengthen my refusal to obey the order.

Vain, however, was my resistance :

"There is no armour against Fate."

A second opinion was called in which corroborated the first; and

most unwillingly and gloomily, in a tempest of wind and rain, I left Normandy to begin the first stage of my journey to the place of my destination, Enghien-les-Bains.

On arriving there, however, its fairness was at once a reproach to such unwillingness and a comfort to beauty-loving eyes. No prettier country can be found; no element of mere prettiness is wanting. For grandeur and sublimity you must go a good deal farther; but the smiling scenery of Enghien has its own charm. The transparent brightness of the air and vividness of colouring are characteristics of the climate of Paris, its near neighbourhood. The lake, with its shores thickly—far too thickly—sown with houses, some of them in very bad taste; the splendid abundance of the vegetation, whether reflected in the clear waters or shading every road from the hot sun, or circling every habitation and enriching every garden with fine trees; the slopes rising to the north-west covered with numerous bright little villages or small towns, seemingly dropped down by happy accident among the woods that clothe them; the picturesque and historical town of Montmorency, with its old church crowning the summit of the green hillocks;—all these combine to form a landscape which must call forth admiration, and which, as a fact, has been sung by the poets, and reproduced by many of the distinguished artists, of France. All that nature has done here is admirable; but it may be confessed that Enghien itself detracted from that feeling by being just a little too *paré*, too *frisé*, if the word may be allowed,—a little Cockneyfied; an impression pro-

duced chiefly, it seemed to me, by the fantastical architecture of certain villas and *kiosques*, not a few of which were actual eyesores; and even those houses which do not come under this condemnation were so much too numerous on the shores of the lake as to inspire strong desires to have the half of them levelled and carted away, and the charming lake itself left to comparative solitude. This piece of water is, for a watering-place, of a respectable size,—620,000 metres, as we are carefully informed, and is fed, among other sources, by the small streams of Soisy, of Eaux-bonnes, and of Ermont, all rippling on to join it. Fishing seemed a most popular amusement,—men, women, and children passing apparently the whole day in that incomprehensible “sport.” Go out when you would—from early morning to dusky evening—you found the same solitary anglers, and family or friendly groups, still fishing.

A real amusement at Enghien are the drives and walks to numberless places of historical interest, and most of them of natural beauty. St Gratien, now the property of the kindly Princesse Matilde, speaks also of Maréchal Catinat; and Epinay tells of the king familiar to the songs of our childhood, “le bon Roi Dagobert.” It was probably there, at his castle of Epinay, that the well-known conversations took place between his Majesty and the good St Eloi. Argenteuil, with its priory of A. D. 656, and its memories of Charlemagne and of the Empress Irene, whose precious gift of “the coat without seam, woven from the top throughout,” found a home there. It was enclosed in a box of ivory, as became so valued a relic, and duly transmitted by Charlemagne to his daughter, Abbess of Argenteuil.

Here also Héloïse took refuge before she was driven thence to the Paraclete. These, and a dozen other towns and villages, make pleasant points for a drive or a walk, and draw one forth daily, attracting some at least of the bathers over and over again.

My favourite walk was to Montmorency: and Sunday after Sunday—being the only afternoon in the whole seven which the iron laws of the *bains* left free from water discipline of one kind or another—did I ascend the hill to join in the vesper service in its Gothic church; from which service attention would sometimes flag, and be replaced by fancy, wandering among the world-famous members of that great race which shared its name. Thoughts came of Mathieu First and his first wife, English Aline: and of his second marriage with the widowed Queen Consort of Louis le Gros; and how, during the minority of his royal step-son, Mathieu became confessedly “la vaillante espée du royaume.” They would even go farther back, and dream of the misty times when the rather doubtful Frankish chief, Lisoie, received holy baptism with Clovis; or dimmer still, to those of the conversion by St Denis, to the Christian faith, of the Gallo-Roman patrician Lisbuis. After which mental excursions, I woke to find it was high time to pray my concluding prayer and quit the church, already long ago emptied of its normal congregation, and left only to a few lingering worshippers.

But some days before I was at liberty to enjoy any day-dreams, I had begun the “*peine forte et dure*” of my “cure.” The first day of my arrival—that arrival having been early in the morning—was allowed to me by my medical autocrat to house myself, to make acquaintance

with the place, and, generally, to make myself as much at home as the nature of things allowed, in preparation for my course of waters.

Next morning my work began with a very early visit to my doctor, who was, moreover, the *medecin en chef*, the superintendent officer of the entire establishment. This first visit was a long one, as my whole "case" had to be gone into and studied: the result of this study was, that I was to take the waters in every possible way—in drinks, in baths, in simple inhalations,—in short, in all the ways invented for the administration of the same. Not one was to be omitted, except douches; and I was at once to begin the course then and there. A packet of tickets was put into my hands, representing a subscription for the course; and on the strength of one out of the packet, before eight o'clock I was shown into a *cabinet de toilette* to commence operations. It was sufficiently large to amply accommodate myself and my servant, and was fitted up with a couple of chairs, a table, a large glass, and pegs for hanging up the discarded clothes. This closet opened into another, which was the *cabinet de bain* proper; and here, again, no comfort or convenience was neglected. A good-sized window opened to regulate the retention or expulsion of the steam: a wooden board at the side of the bath facilitated entrance and exit, and prevented the contact of the bare feet with the stone floor. The baths themselves were large and roomy, each one provided with a thermometer, and turncocks for adding hot and cold water at will, so as to keep the temperature to the exact degree ordered by your prescription. Each bath is also provided with a wooden tray or desk on which to deposit your books or

newspaper or work,—whatsoever, in short, you take with you to while away the thirty to forty-five minutes allotted to your immersion. Bell-ropes are also placed within hand-reach, to summon the immediate attendance of a trained bath-servant, in case any feeling of indisposition, or any other cause, make their instant presence desirable. In my wide experience of Continental water-cures I have come on no establishment so thoroughly well arranged; although at all of them the general features have a common resemblance, at none had I yet found the details so well carried out.

Strangely enough, however, I found that, in the long-run, no part of my treatment fatigued me so much as this pleasant half-hour of idleness in agreeably warm water; and that whereas, in the far different experiences to which the afternoon introduced me, I in time gradually lengthened the period of undergoing the remedy from twenty-five to fifty minutes—as regarded this quite agreeable one, I was forced, on the contrary, to shorten the duration as the weeks passed on.

Needless to dwell on the mere drinking process. Most people know, either personally or by witnessing the imbibings of other sufferers, its unending nature. Glasses of water before the bath, glasses of water after the bath; glasses of water before the walk (and you are ordered to take two or three walks *per diem*), glasses of water after the walk; glasses of water at a certain time before meals, glasses of water at a certain time after meals. All this is as at every other Bath everywhere.

And so also are the pretty gardens, here glorified by the poetic style of *jardin des roses*, the daily music of good bands, the balls, the

concerts, the plays, in which act Paris *artistes*; all and sundry amusements inseparable from the genius of the place.

The point in which I found what to me was an entire novelty was my afternoon's discipline, my first experience of the *salles d'inhalations pulvérisées*.

The preparatory toilet was in itself rather alarming, as well as surprising. Later on in my course, when I had become accustomed and acclimated to all things connected therewith, I was able to laugh and to wish fervently for a photographer to make "a counterfeit presentment" of me in this costume, in which it would surely have puzzled even a detective to recognise me; but on the first two or three occasions I was too much occupied with the operation itself to spend time in vague speculations.

Two strong handsome young women were the presiding spirits of this branch of the work. One of these advanced to meet me and helped me to take off my bonnet and cloak, after which she proceeded to "kilt my coats;" and my skirts having been strongly pinned up, she put on me, first, a large, thick, bath towel, shawl-wise; secondly, a *peignoir*, enveloping me from head to foot; and, thirdly, over this a huge coat of thick, black, shiny macintosh, such as the *remise* coachmen in Paris wear in very wet weather, still bigger and longer than this *peignoir*, in which garment I finally disappeared, leaving visible a mere mass of something dark and shapeless. Staggering under the weight of this unaccustomed load, I sank on a chair behind me. "C'est bien cela, madame," said my attendant, and gently taking hold of my feet, she, without removing any part of my own *chaussure*, put on over it large,

long, thick, grey worsted stockings, and then India-rubber overshoes over all. (I may add that, in consequence of my severe sufferings from cold on my first attempt, two pairs of goloshes and a second warm shawl were ever afterwards put on me.) Finally, I was adorned with an ordinary oilskin bathing-cap, drawn well down to my eyebrows. In this garb I staggered along, powerfully supported by the *baigneuse*, from the robing-room to the *salle*. On her opening the door and shutting it behind us, my feeling was one of boundless astonishment: was it possible that I was to go in *there*? Stay in *there*? Surely the result must be to kill, not cure. Recalling the hundred injunctions I had received from many physicians to avoid carefully every kind of damp, I stood quite still at the door, making no attempt to advance in that watery atmosphere. "Venez, madame, ne craignez rien," loudly called out my *baigneuse*; and indeed nothing but very loud speaking could be heard in that bewildering place. A noise as of rushing waters, as of the heaviest rain, as of a thunder-shower or waterfall, drowned all minor sounds, and was at once explained by the fact that such heaviest downpour was in very deed raining down upon us from end to end, and in every inch of the room. So thick was the descending water, and the ascending jets of the same, rising from forty-two machines arranged for inhalation all over the *salle*, that the atmosphere was as dense as that of a London fog. Nothing whatever could be distinctly seen; but many dim spectres, in shape and garb like to my own, might be guessed at, looming darkly and vaguely in the murky gloom, moving about ceaselessly up and down, up and down, in this mys-

terious water realm. I felt horror-stricken.

Silently and very unwillingly I yielded to the pull of my guide's stout arm, who shouted to me encouragingly, that she would select a nice, mild *appareil* for my inaugural *séance*. Accordingly, after having tested with her hand the force of several jets, she drew a high wooden stool to the narrow stone table, which traversed the entire *salle*, and was fitted with nearly three dozen of these *appareils*, the remainder being fixed along the walls, from each of which the pulverised water is thrown up in strong jets.

This narrow, long, stone table is a very ugly-looking table, if, indeed, it may be called a *table* at all. It is stained unpleasantly with the mineral water which so ceaselessly plays over it. It is scooped out in the middle to allow the overflow to sink there, and be carried off by channels made and provided for that purpose. Along the edges are placed the upright pipes, from about six to ten inches in height, through which shoots up the sulphur stream, broken and pulverised into fine though strong jets, like to the *jets d'eaux* of an ordinary fountain in full play; and these ascending streams are inhaled by the patients. The spectacle is half grotesque, half sad: in itself grotesque—in its association with so many forms of suffering humanity sad enough.

Opposite to the jet of her choice, the *baigneuse* mounted me on the tall stool, tucked my strange garments about me, so as to fully protect my own from any contact with the streams above and below me, on my right hand and on my left; directed me to aid the circulation of the chilled blood by little walks now and again, *comme ces dames*,

as she boldly styled the mournful procession of the vaguely seen, bulky ghosts; and, with a cheery smile, promising to come and fetch me when my time was up, she left me. Involuntarily I made a clutch to detain her, but feeling ashamed of the act I drew back my arm, and bent my head as I was directed to do over the *appareil* allotted to me, for the pulverised waters to enter the throat and nostrils, and to thoroughly and ceaselessly receive the full force of the play of the fountain all over the face and throat.

This occupation still left my thoughts free to work. I looked straight across to my opposite neighbour, similarly employed to myself; and though not divided by two feet of width of table, between the thick-falling waters and my near-sight, I could not in the least make out what she was like. She?—was it a woman at all? It might have been anything in that disguising garb and atmosphere. I looked to right and left of me; everywhere were the same dark shapeless forms, bent over the two-and-forty *appareils* inhaling the water; and, as it so chanced this day—not always, as I afterwards learned—in dumb silence. I also afterwards learned that the force of water was not always so strong as on my first introduction to it. It seems strange now to remember, comparing first days with later ones, that I had, myself, occasionally to complain of want of force.

But no such complaint was possible on that first day. It poured, it roared, it deafened me; it chilled me, chilliest of mortals, to the very marrow—for you understand that it was cold water. My teeth chattered, my blood froze; I felt myself turning to ice, and my head growing very dizzy meanwhile.

Now was the moment, if ever, to assist the circulation "by taking a little walk,—like those ladies." I raised my head preparatory to doing so, and gazed on them again. Ladies? Women? Those phantoms seen,—no, not seen, just guessed at, as I said,—moving through the heavy, blinding vapours. Join *them*? What were they? Not mere living human beings surely? And what was this awful place I had got to? I thought of the Third Circle of the "Inferno," whereof the miserable denizens are beaten down by the perpetual rain, "everlasting, heavy, cursed, cold," pelted with hailstones, sleet, and snow. Or, farther, deeper, more hopeless still, was it Cocytus, the Lake of Eternal Ice, into which I had penetrated by some fearful mischance?

Whatever it was, it plainly disagreed violently with me. Every moment I felt more and more ill; and to avoid an otherwise inevitable catastrophe, I, with much difficulty, got off from my perch, and stumbled to and through the doorway, where, fortunately, I met my *baigneuse* coming in with another victim. "Tiens, tiens!" cried she, rushing to support me, "madame se trouve mal;" and got me along the passages to the robing-room, where I was most carefully tended. Divers restoratives were pressed on me, and I was long and vigorously rubbed to restore circulation and warmth to the frozen limbs. Thus my first trial of this part of my "cure" was a distinct failure. It was long ere feeling came back to the numbed members, and the teeth ceased chattering.

When they did cease, and speech became possible, I protested against any further attempts in that line on my part. Very urgently was I coaxed to try again next day.

"Ladies were often ill the first time; très-impressionnées, quelque fois, pas autant que madame, c'est vrai, mais, . . . enfin. . ." I sternly refused to repeat the experiment. Again and again was I implored to rescind my determination, and again and again I declared I would hold to it.

But who can resist the force of persistent coaxing? Overcome by their entreaties, at last I consented to put the matter into the hands of the doctor, and to abide by his decision.

As soon as I was able to move, I went away down to the doctor's consulting-room. He seemed very much surprised at the violent results of the *séance*, the low pulse and low temperature still continuing, and reserved his decision till next morning, when I was again to present myself for judgment.

When next morning came, however, and the cross-questioning was over, he smiled reassuringly, all appeared to be quite right *then*, and it was his opinion that I should try again that day. I was directed to keep up my courage. I was to "*penser à des choses agréables et bonnes; réciter le chapelet,*" &c., &c. In addition to these moral helps, I was likewise to have on extra wraps—the second shawl and second pair of goloshes, before alluded to—and I was to be inspected from time to time and carefully watched by my *baigneuse*.

I decided on submission and implicit obedience, and to try it again, *quand même*; and I was, in the result, rewarded for the same. For the encouragement of any possible fellow-sufferers, I am able to record that my second trial, thanks chiefly to my increased wrappings, was much more bearable, much more successful than my first; and my third was still an improvement on my second.

Will it be believed that, by force of habit, by dint of daily repetition, by lengthening the duration of my *séance* each time, I grew—

1st, Indifferent to its terrors ;

2d, Rather partial to the operation ;

3d, Epicurean in its working and application ?

This result must certainly have been owing to the unmistakable benefit I felt from it for the several hours immediately succeeding the *séance*, after my first few painful attempts. Can it be credited that I was soon to be seen slipping and stumbling along the watery floor, at the imminent risk of falling down every step I took (for, as may be imagined, walking under that load of wrappings, and in such multiplied *chaussures*, pair over pair, was a difficult and dangerous proceeding), myself testing and choosing my own *jet d'eau*, and, turning away from the weaker and milder ones, deliberately seeking and selecting the most powerful I could find? Yet to this stage of perfection did I arrive in the end.

I never quite got over my horror of the sombre phantoms dimly seen in the murky darkness of the water-fog, wandering in gloomy procession along the *salle*. To the last they had an eerie look. I sat, therefore, bravely, glued, I may say, to my *appareil* ; or at least only rising to exchange it for a more powerful one, if such chanced to attract me in another part,—a line of conduct which excited the approbation and admiration of the *baigneuses*, of whom I was for the time, as it were, the show-pupil. “*Regardez donc, madame ! Personne, pas une, ne fait aussi consciencieusement sa cure ! Et elle était si malade la première fois ! Elle est d'un courage !*” Recalling the notable failure of my first attempt, duly

confessed, I allow myself the proud satisfaction of recording this compensating eulogium.

Fellow-patients occasionally took talking fits, and then they chattered like parrots. They might, if so inclined, have exchanged any amount of secrets, for, except to those addressed in closest contact, the noisy waters prevented the hearing of any words. Occasionally, those next to me on either side ventured on saying little nothings on the outskirts of conversation ; but my sad-heartedness gave them little encouragement to proceed farther, and silence soon again reigned between us ; and the “cure” went on uninterruptedly.

One little pathetic dialogue, however, impressed me, and remains in my memory. A coarse-looking woman (somehow they nearly all looked coarse and common, the effect, perhaps, partly, of the ugly garb), touched my arm, and said questioningly, “This is your first season at these waters, madame ?” And after my answer, and a few further observations from her, I rejoined, “It is not, then, *your* first ?” “It is my fifteenth year,” said she. “They do not cure you of your illness? Why, then, do you thus return to them again and again ?” “Cure me? no : that is impossible. I cannot be cured, for my illness is an incurable one ; but these waters hold it in check, and retard the inevitable end—death.” It seemed to me a brave fight for life ; but perhaps that “life was precious to some loving hearts, and so worth fighting for. And certainly a month at pretty Enghien was no such unpleasant prescription, especially if she had any dear friends with her.

These healing waters, which ameliorate where they cannot cure disease, and retard where they cannot avert the fatal conclusion, are indeed extremely powerful. Many

Parisians are in complete ignorance of the existence at their very gates of so mighty a curative agent. It seems so inevitable to disbelieve in remedies close at hand, and to put one's faith in those far off, and difficult of attainment,—just as we are apt to neglect to see famous sights at our own doors, which foreigners come from a distance to inspect. The undeniable proof of analysis, however, establishes beyond cavil the great strength of these waters, and therefore their sanitary superiority over the far-famed springs of the Pyrenees. We find in the 'Etudes Médicales sur les eaux Minérales d'Enghien les Bains' of Dr Salles-Giron, which good patients may perhaps think themselves bound to read, that the sulphur contained in these waters is as

7½	as against	3½	in those of	Luchon ;
7½	"	2	"	Barèges; and
7½	"	1	"	{ Eaux Bonnes
				and of St
				Sauveur.

These figures are certainly of the category of those of which it is proverbially said, "*ils ont aussi leur éloquence*:" and they are an irrefutable argument in favour of the medical and curative value of these springs. The amount of supply is likewise very great—about 100,000 litres in the twenty-four hours. They are employed in very many kinds of illnesses, differing widely from each other, and, of course, should be taken and used, whether inwardly or outwardly, under medical prescription and supervision; which is a matter as to which English people are not always particular, and the neglect of which precaution I have seen lead to very grave results at more than one of the mineral bathing-places.

I myself experienced a very common effect of these, as of other

mineral waters—namely, an exacerbation of my bad symptoms to such a degree as to make me fear a serious illness. This effect, however, should neither frighten nor discourage the patient. The proceedings should still continue under the physician's care and orders, be it well understood; without this precaution, mineral waters are always a perilous remedy. Another incident of my course was the unpleasant effect of the waters on the nails of the fingers, to which they temporarily imparted a look the reverse of nice—as if the nail-brush had not been duly used: it all passes away at the end of the "cure," and some people escape it altogether.

The *grand salon*, where you simply breathe the air impregnated with sulphur from the waters of the large central fountain which decorates it, is the rendezvous of the patients and their friends; it is there you wait your time for your bath, and it is there that you rest after it: this resting after bathing, inhaling, and all the rest of it, is *de rigueur*. It is a very large and handsome hall, adorned with an abundance of beautiful flowers, plants, and shrubs: they had among others some fine oriental palms and plantains. It is furnished with comfortable seats and lounges, sofas, and arm-chairs of all makes. There are tables whereon are spread a multiplicity of newspapers of all shades of political opinion: there you find the chronicles of fashionable life—and, as is but right, of bathing life also; leaders and letters from all the watering-places of the Continent. Other tables are furnished with writing-materials, which appear to be much approved of and used. There is a bookstall, where you can buy books and music, photographs of the place and neighbourhood, nay, you may even

purchase perfumery and *bonbons*. Briefly, here are pleasant arrangements to enable patients and visitors to spend their whole day comfortably therein; reading, writing, working, talking, as inclination leads them. And these opportunities are duly appreciated, and are very generally and largely profited by.

At the hotel to which I was recommended as being the best at the place, which I believe, on the whole, it decidedly was, there existed this disadvantage—for it *is* one in this kind of interlude of life—of having no *table d'hôte*; and though, it appears, my hotel was once upon a time famed for its good *cuisine*, in my own experiences that important department was very bad; evidently there had been a great falling off since the days of its former renown. There are, however, one or two hotels said to give very good dinners at their *tables d'hôtes*; and they are resorted to for dining purposes by settlers from other hotels, without at all interfering with their taking up their abode at those others, or anywhere they please, in lodgings, or how they choose. The Hotel de Bellevue, which, from its situation just facing the lake, is quite worthy of its name, used habitually to hang out, on its gates, placards with appetising *menus* with which to attract guests, whether in parties or solitary ones; and to judge from the attentive readers constantly grouped before them, these *menus* did in fact prove themselves to be very attractive literature: both sexes, and all ages, studied them with the attention befitting the subject.

There were some divisions of the *établissement* into which I never penetrated, experimentally, my case not requiring those particular *exhibitions*,—namely, the *galerie des douches*. Here there were numer-

ous sorts and kinds of administration of remedial measures. There were the *douches ascendantes*, hot and cold, with sulphur water, or with ordinary water, according to need; there were douches with one great jet of water, and douches with many jets; douches vertical, oblique, horizontal; douches with large volumes of water, and others in small fine rain; there were douches à l'*Ecossaise*—*anglicè*, shower-baths. And besides all these, there were vapour-baths; dry vapour-baths, which sounds rather incomprehensible—and damp vapour-baths, which are quite intelligible. There are also *cabinets* for aromatic fumigation; and others for the rubbings and kneadings of the body and limbs after the Eastern manner. Even all this does not exhaust the list; there are still other—and yet other—modifications of these remedies, other applications of these waters, but they do not enter into the category of my personal experiences.

It is the only *ville d'eux* at which I ever stayed without making any of those acquaintanceships which are generally, even when pleasant ones, as temporary as our connection with the place; but which do sometimes grow into strong and lasting friendships; more, even than that—which have sometimes been known to blossom into the nearest and dearest of human ties, as some of us can tell. But here, during the month of my stay, there was nothing to lead one to wish to have the slightest courtesy acquaintance with any one of the crowd that still pervaded the place.

To me, living in sad seclusion, it could make no difference; but it was a distinctive detail. Whether it was that, in consequence of the lateness of the season, visitors of the higher ranks had left; or whe-

ther, in consequence of the month being the chief one dedicated to the holiday-making of the *petite bourgeoisie*; or whether, in any and every month, the close neighbourhood of Paris—so favourable to overlooking their business there, almost as completely as if they had continued in the capital—would make it always *their* favourite resort;—from whatever cause, the result was, that the large majority of the bathers bore the stamp of a class where intellect and refinement were conspicuous by their absence, and vulgarity disagreeably prominent. The place was swamped by German Jews, or by Germans simply, whose thick Teutonic accents were abundantly audible. A lady who lived at Montmorency told me that a considerable proportion of the neighbouring houses, whether town or country residences, owned Germans as their masters.

No doubt the residents of good names and families living in the other houses and *châteaux* of this closely populous neighbourhood can command excellent society, either amongst themselves or from Paris; but the great majority of the bathers present there towards the end of last autumn could never come under that category.

This vicinity to Paris was one of the consolations for my exile suggested to me, tenderly and coaxingly. "You will be able to run in constantly, and go to the china-shops, and to the Louvre." Vain hope, and deceptive comfort! No tyranny is greater than that of *les eaux*; it claims and keeps your whole time and attention. Never once was I able to "run in," on pleasure bent. Twice indeed I did have to go into town on grim business,—to my banker and to my dentist; and on one of these occasions I did successfully struggle to drag in some of

a pleasanter kind. But I had to hurry back to be in time for my afternoon performances, from noon to three o'clock being the limits of my leave of absence, including in that the short railway journey to and fro. And it was not always that I could command that time. Far from it: I had to manœuvre, and calculate, and combine. Being at the Baths, it was plainly best to give all due time and attention to the momentous work of the "cure;" and, as my handsome bathing-women attested enthusiastically, I did "seriously incline" to do so.

But how long, how very long, that month was! how slowly the lonely days passed on! Every evening my faithful housekeeper and I thankfully repeated to each other, "One day more is over." Sundays, as marking the end of a whole week, were our pleasantest days. Great as was the difference between them and our home Sundays, well filled as the latter are with divine services from morning to night, so poorly compensated here in the alien rites,—which last, however, were very far from being destitute of comfort and power,—let me not be ungrateful to them. Still, nevertheless, allowing for every shortcoming, the Sundays brought much gratification with them. For one thing, they, as I said, clearly marked that our work was drawing to an end; and for another, I, as above stated, could and did enjoy church worship, even in alien tongue: church music, and church feeling, and all this, was undeniably comforting. Thirdly and lastly, on Sunday afternoons I was a free agent. I could take long walks in that lovely country, unchecked by constant looking at our watches, as on week-days, to see if *les eaux*, in some shape or other, did not demand our instant turning

back; and this sensation of freedom was for the time quite new, and very pleasurable.

Still, here again, custom brought its conquering power. By the time my month of penance had really elapsed, and I had undergone my last drink, my last bath, my last freezing *inhalation pulvérisée*, it almost seemed as if I never could have lived any other life—as if my whole previous existence must have been spent in drinking, in bathing, and in inhaling the sulphur waters of bowery Enghien.

For all that, it was with feelings of vivid gladness that I went through all these performances for the last time, and took leave of my doctor. Still more gladly, very early on the finest of autumn mornings, we took the train to Paris, the first step of our homeward voyage, talking over this experiment and the disagreeable prospect of its possible repetition which the imperative commands of my physician ordered to be tried, *da capo*, next fall.

Here, then, ends the first “fytte” of my late “cure,” one differing so greatly in all its accompaniments from any of my former ones. Formerly, closely surrounded by the happy atmosphere of youth, hope,

joy, affection; now, the dreary isolation which is my present portion must needs surely have checked and thwarted the full beneficial effects of the waters, so that I am quite prepared to lay any failure in their action at my own door, and also on the long-standing malady, which is, besides, very obstinate in its nature, therefore more likely to require several seasons rather than one in order to produce anything like real recovery. But I quite believe in the ultimate good results of these and other powerful mineral waters, when they *do* agree with the sufferer, and specially when circumstances allow of their being perseveringly used.

For mere amusement, holiday-makers might do worse than to take Enghien as their headquarters for a few days. They could make excursions hence to so many points of interest; they could, in the pride of health, make merry at the discipline undergone by us poor bathers; and especially, *they* might, in very deed, enjoy the lure fallaciously, though most innocently so, held out to me of “running into” Paris, to search through beguiling china-shops, and to pass hours of delight in the Louvre.

JOHN CALDIGATE.—PART XIII.

CHAPTER LI.—DICK SHAND GOES TO CAMBRIDGESHIRE.

THE news of Shand's return was soon common in Cambridge. The tidings, of course, were told to Mr Caldigate, and were then made known by him to Hester. The old man, though he turned the matter much in his mind,—doubting whether the hopes thus raised would not add to Hester's sorrow should they not ultimately be realised,—decided that he could not keep her in the dark. Her belief could not be changed by any statement which Shand might make. Her faith was so strong that no evidence could shake it,—or confirm it. But there would, no doubt, arise in her mind a hope of liberation if any new evidence against the Australian marriage were to reach her; which hope might so probably be delusive! But he knew her to be strong to endure as well as strong to hope, and therefore he told her at once. Then Mr Seely returned to Cambridge, and all the facts of Shand's deposition were made known at Folking. "That will get him out at once, of course," said Hester, triumphantly, as soon as she heard it. But the squire was older and more cautious, and still doubted. He explained that Dick Shand was not a man who by his simple word would certainly convince a Secretary of State;—that deceit might be suspected;—that a fraudulent plot would be possible; and that very much care was necessary before a convicted prisoner would be released.

"I am quite sure, from Mr Seely's manner, that he thinks I have bribed the young man," said Caldigate.

"You!"

"Yes,—I. These are the ideas which naturally come into people's heads. I am not in the least angry with Mr Seely, and feel that it is only too likely that the Secretary of State and the judge will think the same. If I were Secretary of State I should have to think so."

"I couldn't suspect people like that."

"And therefore, my dear, you are hardly fit to be Secretary of State. We must not be too sanguine. That is all."

But Hester was very sanguine. When it was fully known that Dick had written to Mr Seely immediately on his arrival at Pollington, and that he had shown himself to be a warm partisan in the Caldigate interests, she could not rest till she saw him herself, and persuaded Mr Caldigate to invite him down to Folking. To Folking therefore he went, with the full intention of declaring John Caldigate's innocence, not only there, but all through Cambridgeshire. The Boltons, of whom he had now heard something, should be made to know what an honest man had to say on the subject,—an honest man, and who was really on the spot at the time. To Dick's mind it was marvellous that the Boltons should have been anxious to secure a verdict against Caldigate,—which verdict was also against their own daughter and their own sister. Being quite sure himself that Caldigate was innocent, he could not understand the condition of feeling which would be produced by an equally strong conviction of his guilt. Nor was his mind, probably, imbued with much of that religious scruple which made the

idea of a feigned marriage so insupportable to all Hester's relations. Nor was he aware that when a man has taken a preconception home to himself, and fastened it and fixed it, as it were, into his bosom, he cannot easily dispel it,—even though personal interest should be on the side of such expulsion. It had become a settled belief with the Boltons that John Caldigate was a bigamist, which belief had certainly been strengthened by the pertinacious hostility of Hester's mother. Dick had heard something of all this, and thought that he would be able to open their eyes.

When he arrived at Folking he was received with open arms. Sir John Joram had not quite liked him, because his manner had been rough. Mr Seely had regarded him from the first as a ruined man, and therefore a willing perjurer. Even at Pollington his "bush" manners had been a little distasteful to all except his mother. Mr Caldigate felt some difficulty in making conversation with him. But to Hester he was as an angel from heaven. She was never tired of hearing from him every detail as to her husband's life at Ahalala and Nobble,—particularly as to his life after Euphemia Smith had taken herself to those parts and had quarrelled with him. The fact of the early infatuation had been acknowledged on all sides. Hester was able to refer to that as a mother, boasting of her child's health, may refer to the measles,—which have been bad and are past and gone. Euphemia Smith had been her husband's measles. Men generally have the measles. That was a thing so completely acknowledged, that it was not now the source of discomfort. And the disease had been very bad with him. So bad that he had talked of marriage,—had promised marriage. Crafty women do get hold of inno-

cent men, and drive them sometimes into perdition,—often to the brink of perdition. That was Hester's theory as to her husband. He had been on the brink, but had been wise in time. That was her creed, and as it was supported by Dick, she found no fault with Dick's manner,—not even with the yellow trousers which were brought into use at Folking.

"You were with him on that very day," she said. This referred to the day in April on which it had been sworn that the marriage was solemnised.

"I was with him every day about that time. I can't say about particular days. The truth is,—I don't mind telling you, Mrs Caldigate,—I was drinking a good deal just then." His present state of abstinence had of course become known at Folking, not without the expression of much marvel on the part of the old squire as to the quantity of tea which their visitor was able to swallow. And as this abstinence had of course been admired, Dick had fallen into a way of confessing his past backslidings to a pretty, sympathetic, friendly woman, who was willing to believe all that he said, and to make much of him.

"But I suppose——" Then she hesitated; and Dick understood the hesitation.

"I was never so bad," said he, "but what I knew very well what was going on. I don't believe Caldigate and Mrs Smith even so much as spoke to each other all that month. She had had a wonderful turn of luck."

"In getting gold?"

"She had bought and sold shares till she was supposed to have made a pot of money. People up there got an idea that she was one of the lucky ones,—and it did seem so. Then she got it into her head that she didn't want Caldigate to know

about her money, and he was downright sick of her. She had been good-looking at one time, Mrs Caldigate."

"I daresay. Most of them are so, I suppose."

"And clever. She'd talk the hind-legs off a dog, as we used to say out there."

"You had very odd sayings, Mr Shand."

"Indeed we had. But when she got in that way about her money, and then took to drinking brandy, Caldigate was only too glad to be rid of her. Crinkett believed in her because she had such run of luck. She held a lot of his shares,—shares that used to be his. So they got together, and she left Ahalala and went to Polyeuka Hall. I remember it all as if it were yesterday. When I broke away from Caldigate in June, and went to Queensland, they hadn't seen each other for two months. And as for having been married;—you might as well tell me that I had married her!"

If Mr Caldigate had ever allowed a shade of doubt to cross his mind as to his son's story, Dick Shand's further story removed it. The future of the life which was led at Ahalala and Nobble was painted for him clearly, so that he could see, or fancy that he saw, what the condition of things had been. And this increased faith trickled through to others. Mr Bromley, who had always believed, believed more firmly than before, and sent tidings of his belief to Plum-cum-Pippins, and thence to Babington. Mr Holt, the farmer, became more than ever energetic, and in a loud voice at a Cambridge market ordinary, declared the ill-usage done to Caldigate and his young wife. It had been said over and over again at the trial that Dick Shand's evidence was the one thing wanted, and here

was Dick Shand to give his evidence. Then the belief gained ground in Cambridge; and with the belief there arose a feeling as to the egregious wrong which was being done.

But the Boltons were still assured. None of them had at least as yet given any sign of yielding. Robert Bolton knew very well that Shand was at Folking, but had not asked to see him. He and Mr Seely were on different sides, and could not discuss the matter; but their ideas were the same. It was incredible to Robert that Dick Shand should appear just at this moment, unless as part of an arranged plan. He could not read the whole plot; but was sure that there was a plot. It was held in his mind as a certain fact that John Caldigate would not have paid away that large sum of money had he not thought that by doing so he was buying off Crinkett and the other witnesses. Of course there had been a marriage in Australia, and therefore the arrival of Dick Shand was to him only a lifting of the curtain for another act of the play. An attempt was to be made to get Caldigate out of prison, which attempt it was his duty to oppose. Caldigate had, he thought, deceived and inflicted a terrible stain on his family; and therefore Caldigate was an enemy upon whom it behoved him to be revenged. This feeling was the stronger in his bosom, because Caldigate had been brought into the family by him.

But when Dick Shand called upon him at his office, he would not deny himself. "I have been told by some people that, as I am here in the neighbourhood, I ought to come and speak to you," said Dick. The "some people" had been, in the first instance, Mr Ralph Holt, the farmer. But Dick had discussed the matter with Mr

Bromley, and Mr Bromley had thought that Shand's story should be told direct to Hester's brother.

"If you have anything to say, Mr Shand, I am ready to hear it."

"All this about a marriage at Ahalala between John Caldigate and Mrs Smith is a got-up plan, Mr Bolton."

"The jury did not seem to think so, Mr Shand."

"I wasn't here then to let them know the truth." Robert Bolton raised his eyebrows, marvelling at the simplicity of the man who could fancy that his single word would be able to weigh down the weight of evidence which had sufficed to persuade twelve men and such a judge as Judge Bramber. "I was with Caldigate all the time, and I'm sure of what I'm saying. The two weren't on speaking terms when they were said to be married."

"Of course, Mr Shand, as you have come to me, I will hear what you may have to say. But what is the use of it? The man has been tried and found guilty."

"They can let him out again if he's innocent."

"The Queen can pardon him, no doubt;—but even the Queen cannot quash the conviction. The evidence was as clear as noonday. The judge and the jury and the public were all in one mind."

"But I wasn't here then," said Dick Shand, with perfect confidence. Robert Bolton could only look at him and raise his eyebrows. He could not tell him to his face that no unprejudiced person would believe the evidence of such a witness. "He's your brother-in-law," said Dick, "and I supposed you'd be glad to know that he was innocent."

"I can't go into that question, Mr Shand. As I believe him to have been guilty of as wicked a crime as any man can well commit,

I cannot concern myself in asking for a pardon for him. My own impression is that he should have been sent to penal servitude."

"By George!" exclaimed Dick, "I tell you that it is all a lie from beginning to end."

"I fear we cannot do any good by talking about it, Mr Shand."

"By George!" Dick hitched up his yellow trousers as though he were preparing for a fight. He wore his yellow trousers without braces, and in all moments of energy hitched them up.

"If you please I will say good morning to you."

"By George! when I tell you that I was there all the time, and that Caldigate never spoke to the woman, or so much as saw her all that month, and that therefore your own sister is in honest truth Caldigate's wife, you won't listen to me! Do you mean to say that I'm lying?"

"Mr Shand, I must ask you to leave my office."

"By George! I wish I had you, Mr Bolton, out at Ahalala, where there are not quite so many policemen as there are here at Cambridge."

"I shall have to send for one of them if you don't go away, Mr Shand."

"Here's a man who, even for the sake of his own sister, won't hear the truth, just because he hates his sister's husband! What have I got to get by lying?"

"That I cannot tell." Bolton, as he said this, prepared himself for a sudden attack; but Shand had sense enough to know that he would injure the cause in which he was interested, as well as himself, by any exhibition of violence, and therefore left the office.

"No," said Mr Bromley, when all this was told him; "he is not a cruel man, nor dishonest, nor even

untrue to his sister. But having quite made up his mind that Caldigate had been married in Australia, he cannot release himself from the idea. And, as he thinks so, he feels it to be his duty to keep his sister and Caldigate apart."

"But why does he not believe me?" demanded Dick.

"In answer to that, I can only say that I do believe you."

Then there came a request from Babington that Dick Shand would go over to them there for a day. At Babington opinion was divided. Aunt Polly and her eldest daughter, and with them Mr Smirkie, still thought that John Caldigate was a wicked bigamist; but the squire and the rest of the family had gradually gone over to the other side. The squire had never been hot against the offender, having been one of those who fancied that a marriage at a very out-of-the-way place such as Ahalala did not signify much. And now when he heard of Dick Shand's return and proffered evidence, he declared that Dick Shand having been born a gentleman, though he had been ever so much a sinner, and ever so much a drunkard, was entitled to credence before a host of Crinketts. But with aunt Polly and Julia there remained the sense of the old injury, robbing Shand of all his attributes of birth, and endowing even Crinkett with truth. Then there had been a few words, and the squire had asserted himself, and insisted upon asking Shand to Babington.

"Did you ever see such trousers?" said Julia to her mother. "I would not believe him on his oath."

"Certainly not," said Mr Smirkie, who of the three was by far the most vehement in his adherence to the verdict. "The man is a notorious drunkard. And he has that look of wildness which bad charac-

ters always bring with them from the colonies."

"He didn't drink anything but water at lunch," said one of the younger girls.

"They never do when they're eating," said Mr Smirkie. For the great teetotal triumph had not as yet been made known to the family at Babington. "These regular drunkards take it at all times by themselves, in their own rooms. He has *delirium tremens* in his face. I don't believe a word that he says."

"He certainly does wear the oddest trousers I ever saw," said aunt Polly.

At the same time Dick himself was closeted with the squire, and was convincing him that there had been no Australian marriage at all. "They didn't jump over a broomstick, or anything of that kind?" asked the squire, intending to be jocose.

"They did nothing at all," said Dick, who had worked himself up to a state of great earnestness. "Caldigate wouldn't as much as look at her at that time;—and then to come home here and find him in prison because he had married her! How any one should have believed it!"

"They did believe it. The women here believe it now, as you perceive."

"It's an awful shame, Mr Babington. Think of her, Mr Babington. It's harder on her even than him, for he was,—well, fond of the woman once."

"It is hard. But we must do what we can to get him out. I'll write to our member. Sir George supports the Government, and I'll get him to see the Secretary. It is hard upon a young fellow just when he has got married and come into a nice property."

"And her, Mr Babington!"

"Very bad, indeed. I'll see Sir George myself. The odd part of it is, the Boltons are all against him. Old Bolton never quite liked the marriage, and his wife is a regular tartar."

Thus the squire was gained, and the younger daughter. But Mr Smirkie was as obdurate as ever. Something of his ground was cut from under his feet when Dick's new and peculiar habits were observed at dinner. Mr Smirkie did indeed cling to his doctrine that your real drunkard never drinks at his meals; but when Dick, on being pressed in regard to wine, apologised by saying that he had become so used to tea in the colonies as not to be able to take anything else at dinner, the peculiarity was discussed till he was driven to own that he had drunk nothing stronger for the last two years. Then it became plain that *delirium tremens* was not written on his face quite so plainly as Mr Smirkie had at first thought, and there was nothing left but his trousers to condemn him. But Mr Smirkie was still confident. "I don't think you can go beyond the

verdict," he said. "There may be a pardon, of course;—though I shall never believe it till I see it. But though there were twenty pardons she ought not to go back to him. The pardon does not alter the crime, —and whether he was married in Australia, or whether he was not, she ought to think that he was, because the jury has said so. If she had any feeling of feminine propriety she would shut herself up and call herself Miss Bolton."

"I don't agree with you in the least," said the squire; "and I hope I may live to see a dozen little Caldigates running about on that lawn."

And there were a few words upstairs on the subject between Mr Smirkie and his wife,—for even Mrs Smirkie and aunt Polly at last submitted themselves to Dick's energy. "Indeed, then, if he comes out," said the wife, "I shall be very glad to see him at Plum-cum-Pippins." This was said in a voice which did not admit of contradiction, and was evidence at any rate that Dick's visit to Babington had been successful in spite of the yellow trousers.

CHAPTER LII.—THE FORTUNES OF BAGWAX.

An altogether new idea had occurred to Bagwax as he sat in his office after his interview with Sir John Joram;—and it was an idea of such a nature that he thought he saw his way quite plain to a complete manifestation of the innocence of Caldigate, to a certainty of a pardon, and to an immediate end of the whole complication. By a sudden glance at the evidence his eye had caught an object which in all his glances he had never before observed. Then at once he went to work, and finding that certain little marks were distinctly legible, he became on a

sudden violently hot,—so that the sweat broke out on his forehead. Here was the whole thing disclosed at once,—disclosed to all the world if he chose to disclose it. But if he did so, then there could not be any need for that journey to Sydney, which Sir John still thought to be expedient. And this thing which he had now seen was not one within his own branch of work,—was not a matter with which he was bound to be conversant. Somebody else ought to have found it out. His own knowledge was purely accidental. There would be no disgrace to him in not find-

ing it out. But he had found it out.

Bagwax was a man who, in his official zeal and official capacity, had exercised his intellect far beyond the matters to which he was bound to apply himself in the mere performance of his duties. Post-marks were his business; and had he given all his mind to post-marks, he would have sufficiently carried out that great doctrine of doing the duty which England expects from every man. But he had travelled beyond post-marks, and had looked into many things. Among other matters he had looked into penny stamps, twopenny stamps, and other stamps. In post-office phraseology there is sometimes a confusion because the affixed effigy of her Majesty's head, which represents the postage paid, is called a stamp, and the post-marks or impressions indicating the names of towns are also called stamps. Those post-marks or impressions had been the work of Bagwax's life; but his zeal, his joy in his office, and the general energy of his disposition, had opened up to him also all the mysteries of the queen's-heads. That stamp, that effigy, that twopenny queen's-head, which by its presence on the corner of the envelope purported to have been the price of conveying the letter from Sydney to Nobble, on 10th May 1873, had certainly been manufactured and sent out to the colony since that date!

There are signs invisible to ordinary eyes which are plain as the sun at noonday to the initiated. It is so in all arts, in all sciences. Bagwax was at once sure of his fact. To his instructed gaze the little receipt for twopence was as clearly dated as though the figures were written on it. And yet he had never looked at it before. In the absorbing interest which the

post-mark had created,—that fraudulent post-mark, as it certainly was,—he had never condescended to examine the postage-stamp. But now he saw and was certain.

If it was so,—and he had no doubt,—then would Caldigate surely be released. It is hoped that the reader will follow the mind of Bagwax, which was in this matter very clear. This envelope had been brought up at the trial as evidence that, on a certain day, Caldigate had written to the woman as his wife, and had sent the letter through the post-office. For such sending the postage-stamp was necessary. The postage-stamp had certainly been put on when the envelope was prepared for its intended purpose. But if it could be proved by the stamp itself that it had not been in existence on the date impressed on the envelope, then the fraud would be quite apparent. And if there had been such fraud, then would the testimony of all those four witnesses be crushed into arrant perjury. They had produced the fraudulent document, and by it would be thoroughly condemned. There could be no necessity for a journey to Sydney.

As it all became clear to his mind, he thumped his table partly in triumph,—partly in despair. "What's the matter with you now?" said Mr Curlydown. It was a quarter past four, and Curlydown had not completed his daily inspections. Had Bagwax been doing his proper share of work, Curlydown would have already washed his hands and changed his coat, and have been ready to start for the 4.30 train. As it was, he had an hour of labour before him, and would be unable to count the plums upon his wall, as was usual with him before dinner.

"It becomes more wonderful every day," said Bagwax, solemnly,—almost awfully.

"It is very wonderful to me that a man should be able to sit so many hours looking at one dirty bit of paper."

"Every moment that I pass with that envelope before my eyes I see the innocent husband in jail, and the poor afflicted wife weeping in her solitude."

"You'll be going on to the stage, Bagwax, before this is done."

"I have sometimes thought that it was the career for which I was best adapted. But, as to the envelope, the facts are now certain."

"Any new facts?" asked Curlydown. But he asked the question in a jeering tone, not at all as though desiring confidence or offering sympathy.

"Yes," replied Bagwax, slowly. "The facts are certainly new,—and most convincing; but as you have not given attention to the particular branch concerned, there can be no good in my mentioning them. You would not understand me." It was thus that he revenged himself on Curlydown. Then there was again silence between them for a quarter of an hour, during which Curlydown was hurrying through his work, and Bagwax was meditating whether it was certainly his duty to make known the facts as to the postage-stamp. "You are so unkind," said Bagwax at last, in a tone of injured friendship, burning to tell his new discovery.

"You have got it all your way," said Curlydown, without lifting his head. "And then, as you said just now,—I don't understand."

"I'd tell you everything if you'd only be a little less hard."

Curlydown was envious. He had, of course, been told of the civil things which Sir John Joram had said; and though he did not quite believe all, he was convinced that Bagwax was supposed to have distinguished himself. If there was

anything to be known he would like to know it. Nor was he naturally quarrelsome. Bagwax was his old friend, "I don't mean to be hard," he said. "Of course one does feel one's self fretted when one has been obliged to miss two trains."

"Can I lend a hand?" said Bagwax.

"It doesn't signify now. I can't catch anything before the 5.20. One does expect to get away a little earlier than that on a Saturday. What is it that you've found out?"

"Do you really care to know?"

"Of course I do,—if it's anything in earnest. I took quite as much interest as you in the matter when we were down at Cambridge."

"You see that postage-stamp?" Bagwax stretched out the envelope,—or rather the photograph of the envelope, for it was no more. But the Queen's head, with all its obliterating smudges, and all its marks and peculiarities, was to be seen quite as plainly as on the original, which was tied up carefully among the archives of the trial. "You see that postage-stamp?" Curlydown took his glass, and looked at the document, and declared that he saw the postage-stamp very plainly. "But it does not tell you anything particular?"

"Nothing very particular—at the first glance," said Curlydown, gazing through the glass with all his eyes.

"Look again."

"I see that they obliterate out there with a kind of star."

"That has nothing to do with it."

"The bunch of hair at the back of the head isn't quite like our bunch of hair."

"Just the same;—taken from the same die," said Bagwax.

"The little holes for dividing the stamps are bigger."

"It isn't that."

"Then what the d—— is it?"

"There are letters at every corner," said Bagwax.

"That's of course," said Curlydown.

"Can you read those letters?" Curlydown owned that he never had quite understood what those letters meant. "Those two P's in the two bottom corners tell me that that stamp wasn't printed before '74. It was all explained to me not long ago. Now the post-mark is dated '73." There was an air of triumph about Bagwax as he said this which almost drove Curlydown back to hostility. But he checked himself, merely shaking his head, and continued to look at the stamp. "What do you think of that?" asked Bagwax.

"You'd have to prove it."

"Of course I should. But the stamps are made here and are sent out to the colony. I shall see Smithers at the stamp-office tomorrow, of course." Mr Smithers was a gentleman concerned in the manufacture of stamps. "But I know my facts. I am as well aware of the meaning of those letters as though I had made postage-stamps my own peculiar duty. Now what ought I to do?"

"You wouldn't have to go, I suppose."

"Not a foot."

"And yet it ought to be found out how that date got there." And Curlydown put his finger upon the impression—10th May 1873.

"Not a doubt about it. I should do a deal of good by going if they'd give me proper authority to overhaul everything in the office out there. They had the letter stamped fraudulently;—fraudulently, Mr Curlydown! Perhaps if I stayed at home to give evidence, they'd send you to Sydney to find all that out."

There was a courtesy in this sug-

gestion which induced Curlydown to ask his junior to come down and take pot-luck at Apricot Villa. Bagwax was delighted, for his heart had been sore at the coolness which had grown up between him and the man under whose wing he had worked for so many years. He had been devoted to Curlydown till growing ambition had taught him to think himself able to strike out a line for himself. Mr Curlydown had two daughters, of whom the younger, Jemima, had found much favour in the eyes of Bagwax. But since the jealousy had sprung up between the two men he had never seen Jemima, nor tasted the fruits of Curlydown's garden. Mrs Curlydown, who approved of Bagwax, had been angry, and Jemima herself had become sullen and unloving to her father. On that very morning Mrs Curlydown had declared that she hated quarrels like poison. "So do I, mamma," said Jemima, breaking her silence emphatically. "Not that Mr Bagwax is anything to anybody."

"That does look like something," said Curlydown, whispering to his friend in the railway carriage. They were sitting opposite to each other, with their knees together,—and were of course discussing the envelope.

"It is everything. When they were making up their case in Australia, and when the woman brought out the cover with his writing upon it, with the very name, Mrs Caldigate, written by himself,—Crinkett wasn't contented with that. So they put their heads together, and said that if the letter could be got to look like a posted letter,—a letter sent regularly by the post,—that would be real evidence. The idea wasn't bad."

"Nothing has ever been considered better evidence than post-marks," said Curlydown, with authority.

"It was a good idea. Then they had to get a postage-stamp. They little knew how they might put their foot into it there. And they got hold of some young man at the post-office who knew how to fix a date-stamp with a past date. How these things become clear when one looks at them long enough!"

"Only one has to have an eye in one's head."

"Yes," said Bagwax, as modestly as he could at such a moment. "A fellow has to have his wits about him before he can do anything out of the common way in any line. You'd tell Sir John everything at once;—wouldn't you?" Curlydown raised his hat and scratched his head. "Duty first, you know,—duty first," said Bagwax.

"In a man's own line,—yes," said Curlydown. "Somebody else ought to have found that out. That's not post-office. It's stamps and taxes. It's very hard that a man should have to cut the nose off his own face by knowing more than he need know."

"Duty! duty!" said Bagwax, as he opened the carriage-door and jumped out on to the platform.

When he got up to the cottage, Mrs Curlydown assured him that it was quite a cure for sore eyes to see him. Sophia, the elder of the two daughters at home, told him that he was a false truant; and Jemima surmised that the great attractions of the London season had prevented him from coming down to Enfield. "It isn't that, indeed," he said. "I am always delighted in running down. But the Caldigate affair has been so important!"

"You mean the trial," said Mrs Curlydown. "But the man has been in prison ever so long."

"Unjustly! Most unjustly!"

"Is it so, really?" asked Jemima. "And the poor young bride?"

"Not so much of a bride," said Sophia. "She's got one, I know."

"And papa says you're to go out to Botany Bay," said Jemima. "It'll be years and years before you are back again." Then he explained it was not Botany Bay, and he would be back in six months. And, after all, he wasn't going at all. "Well, I declare, if papa isn't down the walk already!" said Jemima, looking out of the window.

"I don't think I shall go at all," said Bagwax in a melancholy tone as he went up-stairs to wash his hands.

The dinner was very pleasant; and as Curlydown and his guest drank their bottle of port together at the open window, it was definitely settled that Bagwax should reveal the mystery of the postage-stamp to Sir John Joram at once. "I should have it like a lump of lead on my conscience all the time I was on the deep," said Bagwax, solemnly.

"Conscience is conscience, to be sure," said Curlydown.

"I don't think that I'm given to be afraid," said Bagwax. "The ocean, if I know myself, would have no terrors for me;—not if I was doing my duty. But I should hear the ship's sides cracking with every blast if that secret were lodged within my breast."

"Take another glass of port, old boy."

Bagwax did take another glass, finishing the bottle, and continued. "Farewell to those smiling shores. Farewell, Sydney, and all her charms. Farewell to her orange groves, her blue mountains, and her rich gold-fields."

"Take a drop of whitewash to wind up, and then we'll join the ladies." Curlydown was a strictly hospitable man, and in his own house would not appear to take amiss anything his guest might say.

But when Bagwax became too poetical over his wine, Curlydown waxed impatient. Bagwax took his drop of whitewash, and then hurried on to the lawn to join Jemima.

"And you really are not going to those distant parts?"

"No," said Bagwax, with all that melancholy which wine and love combined with sorrow can produce. "That dream is over."

"I am so glad."

"Why should you be glad? Why should a resolve which it almost breaks my heart to make be a source of joy to you?"

"Of course you would have nothing to regret at leaving, Mr Bagwax."

"Very much,—if I were going for ever. No; I could never do that, unless I were to take some dear one with me. But, as I said, that dream is over. It has ever been my desire to see foreign climes, and the chance so seldom comes in a man's way."

"You've been to Ostend, I know, Mr Bagwax."

"Oh yes, and to Boulogne," said Bagwax, proudly. "But the desire of travel grows with the thing it feeds on. I long to overcome great distances,—to feel that I have put illimitable space behind me. To set my foot on shores divided from these by the thickness of all the earth would give me a sense of grandeur which I—which,—which,—would be magnificent."

"I suppose that is natural in a man."

"In some men," said Bagwax, not liking to be told that his heroic instincts were shared by all his brethren.

"But women, of course, think of the dangers. Suppose you were to be cast away!"

"What matter? With a father of a family, of course, it would be

different. But a lone man should never think of such things." Jemima shook her head and walked silently by his side. "If I had some dear one who cared for me I suppose it would be different with me."

"I don't know," said Jemima. "Gentlemen like to amuse themselves sometimes, but it doesn't often go very deep."

"Things always go deep with me," said Bagwax. "I panted for that journey to the antipodes;—panted for it! Now that it is over, perhaps some day I may tell you under what circumstances it has been relinquished. In the meantime my mind passes to other things;—or perhaps I should say my heart—Jemima!" Then Bagwax stopped on the path.

"Go on, Mr Bagwax. Papa will be looking at you."

"Jemima," he said, "will you recompense me by your love for what I have lost on the other side of the globe?" She recompensed him,—and he was happy.

The future father and son-in-law sat and discussed their joint affairs for an hour after the ladies had retired. As to Jemima and his love, Bagwax was allowed to be altogether triumphant. Mrs Curlydown kissed him, and he kissed Sophia. That was in public. What passed between him and Jemima no human eye saw. The old post-office clerk took the younger one to his heart, and declared that he was perfectly satisfied with his girl's choice. "I've always known that you were steady," he said, "and that's what I look to. She has had her admirers, and perhaps might have looked higher; but what's rank or money if a man's fond of pleasure?" But when that was settled they returned again to the Caldigate envelope. Curlydown was not quite so sure as to that question of duty. The pro-

posed journey to Sydney, with a pound a-day allowed for expenses, and the traveller's salary going on all the time, would put a nice sum of ready-money into Bagwax's pocket. "It wouldn't be less than two hundred towards furnishing, my boy," said Curlydown. "You'll want it. And as for the delay, what's six months? Girls like to have a little time to boast about it."

But Bagwax had made up his mind, and nothing would shake him. "If they'll let me go out all the same, to set matters right, of course I'd take the job. I should think it a duty, and would bear the delay as well as I could. If Jemima thought it right I'm sure she wouldn't complain. But since

I saw that letter on that stamp my conscience has told me that I must reveal it all. It might be me as was in prison, and Jemima who was told that I had a wife in Australia. Since I've looked at it in that light I've been more determined than ever to go to Sir John Joram's chambers to-morrow. Good night, Mr Curlydown. I am very glad you asked me down to the cottage to-day; more glad than anything."

At half-past eleven, by the last train, Bagwax returned to town, and spent the night with mingled dreams, in which Sydney, Jemima, and the envelope were all in their turns eluding him, and all in their turns within his grasp.

CHAPTER LIII.—SIR JOHN BACKS HIS OPINION.

"Well, Mr Bagwax, I'm glad that it's only one envelope this time." This was said by Sir John Joram to the honest and energetic post-office clerk on the morning of Wednesday the 3d September, when the lawyer would have been among the partridges down in Suffolk but for the vicissitudes of John Caldigate's case. It was hard upon Sir John, and went something against the grain with him. He was past the time of life at which men are enthusiastic as to the wrongs of others,—as was Bagwax; and had, in truth, much less to gain from the cause, or to expect, than Bagwax. He thought that the pertinacity of Bagwax, and the coming of Dick Shand at the moment of his holidays, were circumstances which justified the use of a little internal strong language,—such as he had occasionally used externally before he had become Attorney-General. In fact he had——damned Dick Shand and Bagwax, and in doing so had considered that Jones his clerk was

internal. "I wish he had gone to Sydney a month ago," he said to Jones. But when Jones suggested that Bagwax might be sent to Sydney without further trouble, Sir John's conscience pricked him. Not to be able to shoot a Suffolk partridge on the 1st of September was very cruel, but to be detained wrongfully in Cambridge jail was worse; and he was of opinion that such cruelty had been inflicted on Caldigate. On the Saturday Dick Shand had been with him. He had remained in town on the Monday and Tuesday by agreement with Mr Seely. Early on the Tuesday intimation was given to him that Bagwax would come on the Wednesday with further evidence,—with evidence which should be positively conclusive. Bagwax had, in the meantime, been with his friend Smithers at the stamp-office, and was now fully prepared. By the help of Smithers he had arrived at the fact that the postage-stamp had certainly been fabricated in 1874,

some months after the date imprinted on the cover of the letter to which it was affixed.

"No, Sir John;—only one this time. We needn't move anything." All the chaos had been restored to its normal place, and looked as though it had never been moved since it was collected.

"And we can prove that this queen's-head did not exist until 1st January 1874?"

"Here's the deposition," said Bagwax, who, by his frequent intercourse with Mr Jones, had become almost as good as a lawyer himself,—“at least, it isn't a deposition, of course,—because it's not sworn.”

"A statement of what can be proved on oath."

"Just that, Sir John. It's Mr Smithers! Mr Smithers has been at the work for the last twenty years. I knew it just as well as he from the first, because I attend to these sort of things; but I thought it best to go to the fountain-head."

"Quite right."

"Sir John will want to hear it from the fountain-head, I said to myself; and therefore I went to Smithers. Smithers is perhaps a little conceited, but his word is—gospel. In a matter of postage-stamps Smithers is gospel."

Then Sir John read the statement; and though he may not have taken it for gospel, still to him it was credible. "It seems clear," he said.

"Clear as the running stream," said Bagwax.

"I should like to have all that gang up for perjury, Mr Bagwax."

"So should I, Sir John;—so should I. When I think of that poor dear lady and her infant babe without a name, and that young father torn from his paternal acres and cast into a vile prison, my blood boils within my veins, and

all my passion to see foreign climes fades into the distance."

"No foreign climes now, Mr Bagwax."

"I suppose not, Sir John," said the hero, mournfully.

"Not if this be true."

"It's gospel, Sir John;—gospel. They might send me out to set that office to rights. Things must be very wrong when they could get hold of a date-stamp and use it in that way. There must be one of the gang in the office."

"A bribe did it, I should say."

"I could find it out, Sir John. Let me alone for that. You could say that you have found me—quick-like, in this matter;—couldn't you, Sir John?" Bagwax was truly happy in the love of Jemima Curly-down; but that idea of earning two hundred pounds for furniture, and of seeing distant climes at the same time, had taken a strong hold of his imagination.

"I am afraid I should have no voice in the matter,—unless with the view of getting evidence."

"And we've got that;—haven't we, Sir John?"

"I think so."

"Duty, Sir John, duty!" said Bagwax, almost sobbing through his triumph.

"That's it, Mr Bagwax." Sir John too had given up his partridges,—for a day or two.

"And that gentleman will now be restored to his wife?"

"It isn't for me to say. As you and I have been engaged on the same side——" To be told that he had been on the same side with the late Attorney-General, was almost compensation to Bagwax for the loss of his journey. "As you and I have been on the same side, I don't mind telling you that I think that he ought to be released. The matter remains with the Secretary of State, who will probably

be guided by the judge who tried the case."

"A stern man, Sir John."

"Not soft-hearted, Mr Bagwax,—but as conscientious a man as you'll be able to put your hand upon. The young wife with her nameless baby won't move him at all. But were he moved by such consideration, he would be so far unfit for his office."

"Mercy is divine," said Bagwax.

"And therefore unfit to be used by a merely human judge. You know, I suppose, that Richard Shand has come home?"

"No!"

"Indeed he has, and was with me a day or two since."

"Can he say anything?" Bagwax was not rejoiced at Dick's opportune return. He thoroughly wished that Caldigate should be liberated, but he wished himself to monopolise the glory of the work.

"He says a great deal. He has sworn point-blank that there was no such marriage at the time named. He and Caldigate were living together then, and for some weeks afterwards, and the woman was never near them during the time."

"To think of his coming just now!"

"It will be a great help, Mr Bagwax; but it wouldn't be enough alone. He might possibly—tell an untruth."

"Perjury on the other side, as it were."

"Just that. But this little queen's-head here can't be untrue."

"No, Sir John, no; that can't be," said Bagwax, comforted; "and the dated impression can't lie either. The envelope is what'll do it after all."

"I hope so. You and Mr Jones will prepare the statement for the Secretary of State, and I will send it myself." With that Mr Bagwax took his leave, and remained closeted

with Mr Jones for much of the remainder of the day.

The moment Sir John was alone he wrote an almost angry note to his friend Honybun, in conjunction with whom and another member of Parliament he had the shooting in Suffolk. Honybun, who was also a lawyer, though less successful than his friend, was a much better shot, and was already taking the cream off the milk of the shooting. "I cannot conceive," he said at the end of his letter, "that, after all my experience, I should have put myself so much out of my way to serve a client. A man should do what he's paid to do, and what it is presumed that he will do, and nothing more. But here I have been instigated by an insane ambition to emulate the good-natured zeal of a fellow who is absolutely willing to sacrifice himself for the good of a stranger." Then he went on to say that he could not leave London till the Friday.

On the Thursday morning he put all the details together, and himself drew out a paper for the perusal of the Secretary of State. As he looked at the matter all round, it seemed to him that the question was so clear that even Judge Bramber could not hesitate. The evidence of Dick Shand was quite conclusive,—if credible. It was open, of course, to strong doubt, in that it could not be sifted by cross-examination. Alone, it certainly would not have sufficed to extort a pardon from any Secretary of State,—as any Secretary of State would have been alive to the fact that Dick might have been suborned. Dick's life had not been such that his single word would have been regarded as certainly true. But in corroboration it was worth much. And then if the Secretary or the judge could be got to go into that very complicated question of the dated stamp,

it would, Sir John thought, become evident to him that the impression had not been made at the time indicated. This had gradually been borne in upon Sir John's mind, till he was almost as confident in his facts as Bagwax himself. But this operation had required much time and much attention. Would the Secretary, or would the judge, clear his table, and give himself time to inspect and to measure two or three hundred post-marks? The date of the fabrication of the postage-stamp would of course require to be verified by official report;—but if the facts as stated by Bagwax were thus confirmed, then the fraudulent nature of the envelope would be put beyond doubt. It would be so manifest that this morsel of evidence had been falsely concocted, that no clear-headed man, let his prepossessions be what they might, could doubt it. Judge Bramber would no doubt begin to sift the case with a strong bias in favour of the jury. It was for a jury to ascertain the facts; and in this case the jury had done so. In his opinion,—in Judge Bramber's opinion, as the judge had often declared it,—a judge should not be required to determine facts. A new trial, were that possible, would be the proper remedy, if remedy were wanted; but as that was impossible, he would be driven to investigate such new evidence as was brought before him, and to pronounce what would, in truth, be another verdict. All this was clear to Sir John; and he told himself that even Judge Bramber would not be able to deny that false evidence had been submitted to the jury.

Sir John, as he occupied his mind with the matter on the Thursday morning, did wake himself up to some generous energy on his client's behalf,—so that in sending the written statements of the case to the

Home Secretary, he himself wrote a short but strongly-worded note. "As it is quite manifest," he said, "that a certain amount of false and fraudulent circumstantial evidence has been brought into court by the witnesses who proved the alleged marriage, and as direct evidence has now come to hand on the other side which is very clear, and as far as we know trustworthy, I feel myself justified in demanding her Majesty's pardon for my client."

On the next day he went down to Birdseye Lodge, near Ipswich, and was quite enthusiastic on the matter with his friend Honybun. "I never knew Bramber go beyond a jury in my life," said Honybun.

"He'll have to do it now. They can't keep him in prison when they find that the chief witness was manifestly perjured. The woman swore on her oath that the letter reached her by post in May 1873. It certainly did not do so. The cover, as we see it, has been fabricated since that date."

"I never thought the cover went for much," said Honybun.

"For very little,—for nothing at all perhaps,—till proved to be fraudulent. If they had left the letter alone their case would have been strong enough for a conviction. As it was, they were fools enough to go into a business of this sort; but they have done so, and as they have been found out, the falsehood which has been detected covers every word of their spoken evidence with suspicion. It will be like losing so much of his heart's blood, but the old fellow will have to give way."

"He never gave way in his life."

"We'll make him begin."

"I'll bet you a pony he don't."

"I'll take the bet," said the late Attorney-General. But as he did so, he looked round to see that not

even a gamekeeper was near enough to hear him.

On that Friday Bagwax was in a very melancholy state of mind at his office, in spite of the brilliancy of his prospects with Miss Curly-down. "I'll just come back to my old work," he said to his future father-in-law. "There's nothing else for me to do."

This was all as it should be, and would have been regarded a day or two ago by Curlydown as simple justice. There had been quite enough of that pottering over an old envelope, to the manifest inconvenience of himself and others. But now the matter was altered. His was a paternal and an affectionate heart, and he saw very plainly the pecuniary advantage of a journey to Sydney. And he knew too that, in official life as well as elsewhere, to those who have more is given. Now that Bagwax was to him in the light of a son, he wished Bagwax to rise in the world. "I wouldn't give it up," said he.

"But what would you do?"

"I'd stick to it like wax till they did something for me."

"There's nothing to stick to."

"I'd take it for granted I was going at once to Sydney. I'd get my outfit, and, by George! I'd take my place."

"I've told Sir John I wasn't going; and he said it wasn't necessary." As Bagwax told his sad tale he almost wept.

"I wouldn't mind that. I'd have it out of them somehow. Why is he to have all the pay? No doubt it's been hundreds to him; and you've done the work and got nothing."

"When I asked him to get me sent, he said he'd no power;—not now it's all so plain." He turned his face down towards the desk to hide the tear that now was, in truth, running down his face. "But duty!"

he said, looking up again. "Duty! England expects—. D— it, who's going to whimper? When I lay my head on my pillow at night and think that I, I, Thomas Bagwax, have restored that nameless one to her babe and her lord, I shall sleep even though that pillow be no better than a hard bolster."

"Jemima will look after that," said the father, laughing. "But still I wouldn't give it up. Never give a chance up,—they come so seldom. I'll tell you what I should do;—I should apply to the Secretary for leave to go to Sydney at once."

"At my own expense?" said Bagwax, horrified.

"Certainly not;—but that you might have an opportunity of investigating all this for the public service. It'll get referred round in some way to the Secretary of State, who can't but say all that you've done. When it gets out of a man's own office he don't so much mind doing a little job. It sounds good-natured. And then if they don't do anything for you, you'll get a grievance. Next to a sum of money down, a grievance is the best thing you can have. A man who can stick to a grievance year after year will always make money of it at last."

On the Saturday, Bagwax went down to Apricot Lodge, having been invited to stay with his beloved till the Monday. In the smiles of his beloved he did find much consolation, especially as it had already been assured to him that sixty pounds a-year would be settled on Jemima on and from her wedding-day. And then they made very much of him. "You do love me, Tom; don't you?" said Jemima. They were sitting on camp-stools behind the grotto, and Bagwax answered by pressing the loved one's waist. "Better than going to Sydney, Tom,—don't you?"

"It is so very different," said Bagwax,—which was true.

"If you don't like me better than anything else in all the world, however different, I will never stand at the altar with you." And she moved her camp-stool perhaps an inch away.

"In the way of loving, of course I do."

"Then why do you grieve when you've got what you like best?"

"You don't understand, Jemima, what a spirit of adventure means."

"I think I do, or I shouldn't be going to marry you. That's quite as great an adventure as a journey to Sydney. You ought to be very glad to get off, now you're going to settle down as a married man."

"Think what two hundred pounds would be, Jemima;—in the way of furniture."

"That's papa's putting in, I know. I hate all that hankering after filthy lucre. You ought to be ashamed of wanting to go so far away just when you're engaged. You wouldn't care about leaving me, I suppose;—not the least."

"I should always be thinking of you."

"Yes, you would! But suppose I wasn't thinking of you. Suppose I took to thinking of somebody else. How would it be then?"

"You wouldn't do that, Jemima."

"You ought to know when you're well off, Tom." By this time he had recovered the inch and perhaps a little more. "You ought to feel that you've plenty to console you."

"So I do. Duty! duty! England expects that every man——"

"That's your idea of consolation, is it?" and away went the camp-stool half a yard.

"You believe in duty, don't you, Jemima?"

"In a husband's duty to his wife, I do;—and in a young man's duty to his sweetheart."

"And in a father's to his children."

"That's as may be," said she, getting up and walking away into the kitchen-garden. He of course accompanied her, and before they got to the house had promised her not to sigh for the delights of Sydney, nor for the perils of adventure any more.

CHAPTER LIV.—JUDGE BRAMBER.

A Secretary of State who has to look after the police and the magistrates, to answer questions in the House of Commons, and occasionally to make a telling speech in defence of his colleagues, and, in addition to this, is expected to perform the duties of a practical court of appeal in criminal cases, must have something to do. To have to decide whether or no some poor wretch shall be hanged, when, in spite of the clearest evidence, humanitarian petitions by the dozen overwhelm him with claims for mercy, must be a terrible responsibility. "No,

your Majesty, I think we won't hang him. I think we'll send him to penal servitude for life;—if your Majesty pleases." That is so easy, and would be so pleasant. Why should any one grumble at so right royal a decision? But there are the newspapers, always so prone to complain;—and the Secretary has to acknowledge that he must be strong enough to hang his culprits in spite of petitions, or else he must give up that office. But when the evidence is not clear the case is twice more difficult. The jury have found their verdict, and the law

intends that the verdict of a jury shall be conclusive. When a man has been declared to be guilty by twelve of his countrymen,—he is guilty, let the facts have been what they may, and let the twelve have been ever so much in error. Majesty, however, can pardon guilt, and hence arises some awkward remedy for the mistakes of jurymen. But as unassisted Majesty cannot itself investigate all things,—is not, in fact, in this country supposed to perform any duties of that sort,—a Secretary of State is invested with the privilege of what is called mercy. It is justice rather that is wanted. If Bagwax were in the right about that envelope,—and the reader will by this time think that he was right; and if Dick Shand had sworn truly,—then certainly our friend John Caldigate was not in want of mercy. It was instant justice that he required,—with such compensation as might come to him from the indignant sympathy of all good men.

I remember to have seen a man at Bermuda whose fate was peculiar. He was sleek, fat, and apparently comfortable, mixing pills when I saw him, he himself a convict and administering to the wants of his brother convicts. He remonstrated with me on the hardness of his position. "Either I did do it, or I didn't," he said. "It was because they thought I didn't that they sent me here. And if I didn't, what right had they to keep me here at all?" I passed on in silence, not daring to argue the matter with the man in face of the warder. But the man was right. He had murdered his wife;—so at least the jury had said, —and had been sentenced to be hanged. He had taken the poor woman into a little island, and while she was bathing had drowned her. Her screams had been heard on the mainland, and the jury had

found the evidence sufficient. Some newspaper had thought the reverse, and had mooted the question;—was not the distance too great for such screams to have been heard, or, at any rate, understood? So the man was again brought to trial in the Court of the Home Office, and was, —not pardoned, but sent to grow fat and make pills at Bermuda. He had, or he had not, murdered his wife. If he did the deed he should have been hanged;—and if not, he should not have been forced to make extorted pills.

What was a Secretary of State to do in such a case? No doubt he believed that the wretch had murdered his wife. No doubt the judge believed it. All the world believed it. But the newspaper was probably right in saying that the evidence was hardly conclusive,—probably right because it produced its desired effect. If the argument had been successfully used with the jury, the jury would have acquitted the man. Then surely the Secretary of State should have sent him out as though acquitted; and, not daring to hang him, should have treated him as innocent. Another trial was, in truth, demanded.

And so it was in Caldigate's case. The Secretary of State, getting up early in the morning after a remarkable speech, in which he vindicated his Ministry from the attacks of all Europe, did read all the papers, and took home to himself the great Bagwaxian theory. He mastered Dick's evidence;—and managed to master something also as to Dick's character. He quite understood the argument as to the postage - stamps, —which went further with him than the other arguments. And he understood the perplexity of his own position. If Bagwax was right, not a moment should be lost in releasing the ill-used man. To think of

pardon, to mention pardon, would be an insult. Instant justice, with infinite regrets that the injuries inflicted admitted of no compensation,—that, and that only, was impressively demanded. How grossly would that man have been ill-used!—how cruelly would that woman have been injured! But then, again,—if Bagwax was wrong;—if the cunning fraud had been concocted over here and not in Sydney;—if the plot had been made, not to incarcerate an innocent man, but to liberate a guilty man, then how unfit would he show himself for his position were he to be taken in by such guile! What crime could be worse than that committed by Caldigate against the young lady he had betrayed, if Caldigate were guilty? Upon the whole, he thought it would be safer to trust to the jury; but comforted himself by the reflection that he could for a while transfer the responsibility. It would perhaps be expedient to transfer it altogether. So he sent all the papers on to Judge Bramber.

Judge Bramber was a great man. Never popular, he had been wise enough to disregard popularity. He had forced himself into practice, in opposition to the attorneys, by industry and perspicuity. He had attended exclusively to his profession, never having attempted to set his foot on the quicker stepping-stones of political life. It was said of him that no one knew whether he called himself Liberal or Conservative. At fifty-five he was put upon the bench, simply because he was supposed to possess a judicial mind. Here he amply justified that opinion,—but not without the sneer and ill words of many. He was now seventy, and it was declared that years had had no effect on him. He was supposed to be absolutely merciless,—as hard as a nether millstone; a judge who could

put on the black cap without a feeling of inward disgust. But it may be surmised that they who said so knew nothing of him,—for he was a man not apt to betray the secrets of his inner life. He was noted for his reverence for a jury, and for his silence on the bench. The older he grew the shorter became his charges; nor were there wanting those who declared that his conduct in this respect was intended as a reproach to some who were desirous of adorning the bench by their eloquence. To sit there listening to everything, and subordinating himself to others till his interposition was necessary, was his idea of a judge's duty. But when the law had declared itself, he was always strong in supporting the law. A man condemned for murder ought to be hanged,—so thought Judge Bramber,—and not released, in accordance with the phantasy of philanthropists. Such were the requirements of the law. If the law were cruel, let the legislators look to that. He was once heard to confess that the position of a judge who had condemned an innocent man might be hard to bear; but, he added, that a country would be unfortunate which did not possess judges capable of bearing even that sorrow. In his heart he disapproved of the attribute of mercy as belonging to the Crown. It was opposed to his idea of English law, and apt to do harm rather than good.

He had been quite convinced of Caldigate's guilt,—not only by the direct evidence, but by the concurrent circumstances. To his thinking, it was not in human nature that a man should pay such a sum as twenty thousand pounds to such people as Crinkett and Euphemia Smith,—a sum of money which was not due either legally or morally,—except with an improper object. I have said that he was a

great man ; but he did not rise to any appreciation of the motives which had unquestionably operated with Caldigate. Had Caldigate been quite assured, when he paid the money, that his enemies would remain and bear witness against him, still he would have paid it. In that matter he had endeavoured to act as he would have acted had the circumstances of the mining transaction been made known to him when no threat was hanging over his head. But all that Judge Bramber did not understand. He understood, however, quite clearly, that under no circumstances should money have been paid by an accused person to witnesses while that person's guilt and innocence were in question. In his summing-up he had simply told the jury to consider the matter ;—but he had so spoken the word as to make the jury fully perceive what had been the result of his own consideration.

And then Caldigate and the woman had lived together, and a distinct and repeated promise of marriage had been acknowledged. It was acknowledged that the man had given his name to the woman, so far as himself to write it. Whatever might be the facts as to the post-mark and postage-stamp, the words "Mrs Caldigate" had been written by the man now in prison.

Four persons had given direct evidence ; and in opposition to them there had been nothing. Till Dick Shand had come, no voice had been brought forward to throw even a doubt upon the marriage. That two false witnesses should adhere well together in a story was uncommon ; that three should do so, most rare ; with four it would be almost a miracle. But these four had adhered. They were people, probably, of bad character,—whose lives had perhaps been lawless. But if so, it would have been so much easier to

prove them false if they were false. Thus Judge Bramber, when he passed sentence on Caldigate, had not in the least doubted that the verdict was a true verdict.

And now the case was sent to him for reconsideration. He hated such reconsiderations. He first read Sir John Joram's letter, and declared to himself that it was unfit to have come from any one calling himself a lawyer. There was an enthusiasm about it altogether beneath a great advocate,—certainly beneath any forensic advocate employed otherwise than in addressing a jury. He, Judge Bramber, had never himself talked of "demanding" a verdict even from a jury. He had only endeavoured to win it. But that a man who had been Attorney-General,—who had been the head of the bar,—should thus write to a Secretary of State, was to him disgusting. To his thinking, a great lawyer, even a good lawyer, should be incapable of enthusiasm as to any case in which he was employed. The ignorant childish world outside would indulge in zeal and hot feelings ; but for an advocate to do so was to show that he was no lawyer,—that he was no better than the outside world. Even spoken eloquence was, in his mind, almost beneath a lawyer,—studied eloquence certainly was so. But such written words as these disgusted him. And then he came across allusions to the condition of the poor lady at Folking. What could the condition of the lady at Folking have to do with the matter ? Though the poor lady at Folking should die in her sorrow, that could not alter the facts as they had occurred in Australia ! It was not for him, or for the Secretary of State, to endeavour to make things pleasant all-round here in England. It had been the jury's duty to find out whether that crime had been committed, and his duty to see that

all due facilities were given to the jury. It had been Sir John Joram's duty to make out what best case he could for his client,—and then to rest contented. Had all things been as they should be, the Secretary of State would have had no duty at all in the matter. It was in this frame of mind that Judge Bramber applied himself to the consideration of the case. No juster man ever lived ;—and yet in his mind there was a bias against the prisoner.

Nevertheless he went to his work with great patience, and a resolve to sift everything that was to be sifted. The Secretary of State had done no more than his required duty in sending the case to him, and he would now do his. He took the counter-evidence as it came in the papers. In order that the two Bagwaxian theories, each founded on the same small document, might be expounded, one consecutively after the other, Dick Shand and his deposition were produced first. The judge declared to himself that Dick's single oath, which could not now be tested by cross-examination, amounted to nothing. He had been a drunkard and a pauper,—had descended to the lowest occupation which the country afforded, and had more than once nearly died from *delirium tremens*. He had then come home penniless, and had—produced his story. If such evidence could avail to rescue a prisoner from his sentence, and to upset a verdict, what verdict or what sentence could stand? Poor Dick's sworn testimony, in Judge Bramber's mind, told rather against Caldigate than for him.

Then came the post-marks,—as to which the Bagwaxian theory was quite distinct from that as to the postage-stamp. Here the judge found the facts to be somewhat complicated and mazy. It was long

before he could understand the full purport of the argument used, and even at last he hardly understood the whole of it. But he could see nothing in it to justify him in upsetting the verdict ;—nothing even to convince him that the envelope had been fraudulently handled. There was no evidence that such a dated stamp had not been in use at Sydney on the day named. Copies from the records kept daily at Sydney,—photographed copies,—should have been submitted before that argument had been used.

But when it came to the postage-stamp, then he told himself very quickly that the envelope had been fraudulently handled. The evidence as to the date of the manufacture of the stamp was conclusive. It could not have served to pay the postage on a letter from Sydney to Nobble in May 1873, seeing that it had not then been in existence. And thus any necessity there might otherwise have been for further inquiry as to the post-marks was dissipated. The envelope was a declared fraud, and the fraud required no further proof. That morsel of evidence had been fabricated, and laid, at any rate, one of the witnesses in the last trial open to a charge of perjury. So resolving, Judge Bramber pushed the papers away from him, and began to think the case over in his mind.

There was certainly something in the entire case as it now stood to excuse Sir John. That was the first line which his thoughts took. An advocate having clearly seen into a morsel of evidence on the side opposed to him, and having proved to himself beyond all doubt that it was maliciously false, must be held to be justified in holding more than a mere advocate's conviction as to the innocence of his client. Sir John had of course felt that a foul plot had been contrived. A foul plot no

doubt had been contrived. Had the discovery taken place before the case had been submitted to the jury, the detection of that plot would doubtless have saved the prisoner, whether guilty or innocent. So much Judge Bramber admitted.

But should it necessarily serve to save him now? Before a jury it would have saved him, whether guilty or innocent. But the law had got hold of him, and had made him guilty, and the law need not now subject itself to the normal human weakness of a jury. The case was now in his hands,—in his, and those of the Secretary, and there need be no weakness. If the man was innocent, in God's name let him go;—though, as the judge observed to himself, he had deserved all he had got for his folly and vice. But this discovered plot by no means proved the man's innocence. It only proved the determination of certain persons to secure his conviction, whether by foul means or fair. Then he recapitulated to himself various cases in which he had known false evidence to have been added to true, with the object of convincing a jury as to a real fact.

It might well be that this gang of ruffians,—for it was manifest that there had been such a gang,—finding the envelope addressed by the man to his wife, had fraudulently,—and as foolishly as fraudulently,—endeavoured to bolster up their case by the postage-stamp and the post-mark. Looking back at all the facts, remembering that fatal twenty thousand pounds, remembering that though the post-marks were forged on that envelope the writing was true, remembering the acknowledged promise and the combined testimony of the four persons,—he was inclined to think that something of the kind had been done in this case. If it were so, though he would fain see the perpetrators of

that fraud on their trial for perjury, their fraud in no way diminished Caldigate's guilt. That a guilty man should escape out of the hands of justice by any fraud was wormwood to Judge Bramber. Caldigate was guilty. The jury had found him so. Could he take upon himself to say that the finding of the jury was wrong because the prosecuting party had concocted a fraud which had not been found out before the verdict was given? Sir John Joram, whom he had known almost as a boy, had "demanded" the release of his client. The word stuck in Judge Bramber's throat. The word had been injudicious. The more he thought of the word the more he thought that the verdict had been a true verdict, in spite of the fraud. A very honest man was Judge Bramber;—but human.

He almost made up his mind,—but then was obliged to confess to himself that he had not quite done so. "It taints the entire evidence with perjury," Sir John had said. The woman's evidence was absolutely so tainted,—was defiled with perjury. And the man Crinkett had been so near the woman that it was impossible to disconnect them. Who had concocted the fraud? The woman could hardly have done so without the man's connivance. It took him all the morning to think the matter out, and then he had not made up his mind. To reverse the verdict would certainly be a thorn in his side,—a pernicious thorn,—but one which, if necessary, he would endure. Thorns, however, such as these are very persuasive.

At last he determined to have inquiry made as to the woman by the police. She had laid herself open to an indictment for perjury, and in making inquiry on that head something further might probably be learned.

HAMLET.

It is common to say that no actor upon the English stage, who has any ambition or love for his profession, can die happy without having once at least attempted to represent Hamlet. It is the part which inspires the most imperfect, and leads on the most experienced in never-failing pursuit of an excellence to come—a laurel always there for the winning. It is, we are also told by those who know the stage well, although one of the most difficult of all the creations of poetry, the one also in which absolute failure is less common than in any other. No one, perhaps, of all its many representatives has given us a complete impersonation of the strange and wonderful being whom we never completely understand, whom we discuss and quarrel over all our lives, but whom, at least, we know, as we know few other of our lifelong friends; while at the same time, every one who has attempted the part has got some hold on humanity through those words, which the merest moulder of phrases cannot spoil, and that most touching and terrible position which, even when we do not understand it, we feel, moving us to the bottom of our hearts. Whether it is a *doctrinaire* who is upon the stage, grafting his own philosophies upon the poet's creation, or an ambitious mime who attempts it only as the part which pays best when successful, our own ideal of the noble Dane, and intimate acquaintance with his real being, save his representative from entire failure. He is more to us than any actor; and it is scarcely going too far to say that, as each new attempt is made, the universal curiosity and interest it excites are drawn forth at least quite as much

by the hope that now at last we may know our Hamlet better, as by the lighter and more superficial eagerness to see how the actor acquits himself in a great part. No other tragic creation, however great, has the same hold upon us. Othello is noble and terrible in his mingled strength and weakness, and Lear tears our hearts asunder with a passion of painful and tragic delight; but Hamlet stands to us in a far closer relation—he is a part of our intellectual training, of our higher being, of all the mysteries that move within us, and so often burst into unconscious expression in his very words. How it should be so we cannot tell—for it is impossible to conceive a type less like the ordinary estimate of English character; yet we feel assured the reader will agree with us when we say, that no other creation of poetry has ever seized hold upon and entered into the soul of the nation with such complete and perfect sovereignty. No hero of history—no brave and resolute Englishman—no King Hal, gay in his excesses, noble in his transformation, the very type of Anglo-Saxon manliness—comes within a thousand miles of that mystic traveller between life and death, that impersonation of all the doubts and questionings of humanity, in the heart of a people which has no turn for philosophy, a race prompt and ready, and more apt at blows than words. Rarely has there happened in the mental history of a country so rare a phenomenon. And we know no parallel to it in any other national experience, unless it were in Spain, where, however, the long lean figure of that forlorn and last knight-errant has too much humour in the

atmosphere that surrounds it, and too much mixture of the ludicrous, to hold the same position. The German Faust makes no such universal claim upon the sympathies, and the French Alceste is but a weakened shadow of Hamlet; while in all these great conceptions there is something which chimes in with the national temper of the race that has produced them. The Spaniard's hyper-chivalry, the German's wild yet carnal mysticism, the Frenchman's bitter distinctness of perception and cynic-sentimental tendency, are all more or less embodied in these central figures of their literature. But that we, who pride ourselves upon our national energy and practical character, and whose faith it is that "if it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well it were done quickly,"—that we should have selected Hamlet from among all the poetical creations in which we are so rich, as the object of our unanimous interest, is one of the strangest facts in literary history. It would be incredible, were it not absolutely true.

This reign of Hamlet over the English imagination comes from time to time to a sudden climax, by means of some new or powerful actor; and we are at present in the midst of one of those high tides of popular interest. Mr Irving is doing what all his great predecessors on the stage have done, with varying power and success; and as it is now a long time since any actor has attempted perseveringly to win this crown of reputation, the effort is all the more interesting. The last attempt of the kind, and indeed the only one which comes within our own experience of the stage, was that made by Fechter more than a dozen years ago. We do not ourselves sympathise with the feeling which makes some people refuse their suffrage to an admirable

and accomplished actor, because his English was somewhat defective. This is one of the criticisms which are becoming more and more general among us, and which dwell upon external and minute detail, in entire indifference to the spirit and soul of the performance. Fechter has fallen out of fashion. Perhaps he never did secure the critics so completely on his side as he did the simple multitudes who used to hang on his lips; but at all events it requires courage now to produce his name, in face of the superciliously indulgent smile with which it is received by those who are supposed to know. Fechter's Hamlet, however, was, we are bold to say, the most interesting piece of acting which we have ever seen; and his English can hardly be said to have been more defective than that which Mr Irving has managed to make the public accept as a possible rendering of Shakespeare's noble tongue. But few things could be more unlike than the breadth and ease of the great French actor's treatment, and the laborious and infinitely painstaking effort of the Hamlet who is at present in possession of the stage. It is impossible, we suppose, without some touch of genius, to have attained the mastery over the public which Mr Irving undoubtedly possesses. In this age of burlesques and dramatic folly, he has gained the complete and absorbed attention, night after night, of a large and highly-cultivated audience, and succeeded in moving society in London to an almost universal interest in every new attempt he makes—which is no small triumph. Our own opinion, however, is, that this remarkable actor has attained his successes more by sheer force of character than by genius. He has conquered the public by his bow and his spear—by means of the intense feel-

ing and concentrated energy of mind with which, it is evident, he approaches his work—labouring at it like an athlete of Michael Angelo, with every muscle starting and every sinew strung to its utmost tension. He is in such deadly earnest in everything he does that we can scarcely refuse our interest to the effort which costs so much. And as difficulty overcome is universally recognised as a very high attraction to human curiosity and interest, there must always be a large section of mankind to whom the sight of the struggle by which that difficulty is overcome will always be more impressive and affecting than the success which looks easy, the calm mastery of the greater artist who fights and strains too in his time, but that not in, but out of, sight of the gazing crowd. This is not Mr Irving's way: he takes the public into his confidence, and shows them the beads of toil upon his forehead, the quiver in his limbs of muscular and nervous as well as mental exertion. It is something like a gladiator that we have before us, "taking arms"—as says our Shakespeare, with that confusion of metaphor at which we laugh tenderly, liking him the better, supreme master, for the slip that proves him human—"against a sea of troubles," facing all the wild beasts of difficulty, and rending his way to the prize which the excited spectators accord him, almost more for the pluck and force and energy with which he has toiled for it, than for the excellence of the performance. The people who crowd the Lyceum every night have thus, if not a first-rate representation of Hamlet, yet a very interesting and even exciting spectacle set before them—the sight of an able and eccentric mind full of contortions, yet also of strength, struggling with

all the power nature has given it, upward to the platform of genius, with every faculty strained, and its whole being quivering in the effort. There are those who mount to that platform lightly, by grace of nature, or seem to do so; but these, if finer and higher, are perhaps in reality less interesting than the indomitable fighter who struggles upward to it, his teeth set, his shoulders squared, his every limb in energetic action. Mr Irving in this point of view presents a spectacle to gods and men of which it is difficult to exaggerate the interest. He has almost every quality which should interest the lookers-on—a fine and generous aim, a high courage, and the most determined tenacity of purpose. If he cannot scale these heights, we may be sure he will die half-way, always fighting upwards, never giving in. He is in a hundred perils every day, and nothing daunts him,—perils of nature, perils of excessive friendship, perils of success—sometimes the worst of all. Yet every step he has made, even when we cannot admire it, we are obliged to recognise as an honest endeavour towards that which is best and highest. So far as can be judged from without, never man was more perfectly sincere or strenuous in his determination to do well. It is more than an artistic effort, it is a moral conflict with adverse powers of nature in which he is engaged; and if he fails in the end, his failure will be from no fault of his, no want of zeal or conscience or energy in the man. One does not generally use such words in respect to an actor's study of his part; but it is the highest testimonial that can be given to Mr Irving to say that we are obliged to employ them after witnessing his evening's work.

Notwithstanding what has been

said of the unanimity of English feeling in respect to Hamlet, there is, perhaps, no dramatic creation in the world about which there has been so much difference of opinion. Naturally the great mass of readers and spectators make no attempt to analyse it at all. The greatness of the mind presented before them, the consciousness of a human being most real and tangible, though looming over them with a confused greatness which they can appreciate without being able to understand it, is enough to satisfy all their intellectual requirements; though even in this widest circle, the question whether Hamlet's madness was assumed or real will arouse a certain intellectual interest. But above the first level of the admiring and uncritical public there are many circles of critics, each of which has its spoken or unspoken creed in regard to Shakespeare's great creation. There is scarcely a drawing-room party among the educated classes in which, were the question mooted, there would not be found warm partisans on both sides of the question, and inquirers with ideas of their own as to the real cause of that vacillation, which is the most obvious feature in the character to the ordinary observer. We might perhaps ask, though without any possibility of reply, whether the poet himself had any intention of making this mystery clear to us; or whether, indeed, it was within the range of his genius to fathom altogether the great and mysterious being—greater and more wonderful by far than the Warwickshire yeoman's son, the playwright of the Globe—whom he put miraculously into the world to live there for ever, outlasting a hundred generations of men. This, however, is a view which critics never, and the humble reader very rarely, consent to take. That mystic independence of

its creator which belongs to a great poetical conception of character, reflecting, perhaps, more truly than anything else can, our own mortal independence (so far at least as consciousness goes) of our Maker, and power to contradict, and, as much as in us lies thwart, His purposes, is incredible to most people. To our own thinking it is plain enough that a dramatic conception of the highest order does follow a law of its own being which is not, as we think, entirely under the control of its originator. "I did not do it; they did it themselves," Thackeray (we think) is reported to have said of some of his heroes and heroines whose proceedings did not please the world; and the merest dabbler in fiction must be aware of a curious current of influence not originated by him which sweeps the personages of his story here and there, following some necessity of their nature which he may not even comprehend, and which does not agree with his plan for them. We do not mean to imply an opinion that Hamlet escaped from the control of the poet to whom he owes his birth; but only that so great a creation might well have, like an actual being, many doubtful and unresolved points in him, over which spectators might discuss, without any absolute certainty, even on the part of his maker, as to which party was in the right. To ourselves Hamlet is the greatest instance of that disenchantment which is, of all the miseries in the world, the one most crushing and most general. Disenchantment—*désillusionnement*—that opening of the eyes to see a world altogether different from the world we have observed, which is about the bitterest pang of which the soul is capable. It is the burden more or less of all the world's worst complaints. The common mass of us encounter it

in detail, and have happily managed to weave some new veil over the painful reality in one region before we are caught in another, and obliged to look on and see the veils of imagination stripped from the facts of life. And no one can bear to dwell upon this unveiling. It brings madness or it brings death; or in the case of a noble mind too great for such brief and vulgar conclusion, it evolves a Hamlet—a man standing among the wrecks of life so deeply amazed, so confounded and heart-struck, that his trouble paralyses him, and nothing seems worth doing of all that might be done. Such a one in real life, we may perhaps say, was Leopardi, though without that spring of sweeter nature in him which kept Hamlet in being. In the case of the real man, we do not know what it was which turned all the milk to gall, and brought the spirit face to face with a universe of hideous folly and falsehood, instead of that world all dressed in smiles and sweetness in which he had taken delusive delight. The worst and most dismal depth of the philosophical despair which is called pessimism, was the natural issue with the Italian of that poisoning of all happier impulse. What it was in the royal Dane we all know.

Hamlet is greater, larger than Leopardi; his nature would, we cannot doubt, have righted itself one time or other, had it not been so precipitately cut short: but there is a certain illumination in the contrast yet resemblance. The terrible gulf, unlighted by any star, into which Leopardi plunged at the moment of which all his poems are full, the point of life at which he awakened, and at which, as he tells us, the supreme delusion of his first happier impressions became apparent to him—has a profound blackness of despair in it which

is less within the range of our sympathies than the confused and gloomy world, still in the throes of earthquake, amid which Hamlet stands, sick at heart, gazing with eyes of wild dismay at the sanctities which fall in succession into the dust one after another, leaving him ever more and more haggard and bereaved. His father's death to be revenged, and all that "cursed spite" to be set right, are rather living influences than otherwise to his soul, bewildered with loss, and sick and hopeless in the downfall of everything that is sweet and fair around. These motives keep up a struggle within him, and in reality prevent the gloomy waves from closing over his head; but yet have not acquired the consistency of force necessary to drive him back into living, and into so much hope as would alone make living possible. His vacillation is but the struggle of that wholesome and righteous passion against the inertness of despair, the *cui bono* of his disenchanted existence. He tries to rouse himself, but in vain. What were the good? If Claudius were slain, would that restore honour and purity to the desecrated house? could anything remake that polluted mother into the type of holy womanhood above corruption? He tries to work himself up to the point of action, but there is no hope in him to give vigour to his arm. Something of the old energy bursts out in fits and starts, but is paralysed by this supreme sickness of heart and failure of all possibilities of restoration. What Hamlet wants is more than a vengeance: it is a re-creation. Nothing short of the undoing of all the monstrous evil which has killed his soul in him, is worth his living for. Mending is futile, the harm is too fundamental, the misery too complete. Revenge would be a momentary sat-

isfaction, would give him ease, as when a wounded man tears off his bandages; but what more could revenge do for Hamlet? Restore to him his world of youth, his trust in those around him, his belief that one is pure and another true, his spotless mother, his innocent love, his loyal friends?—ah no! not one of them. And therefore, now with flashes of wild scorn, now with utterances of deepest sadness, he stands “hesitating,” as we say, before the vengeance which will, he sees, be but a deception like all the rest, and make no real difference. Leopardi, the gloomy shadow of an actual Hamlet, had no possibility even of a stroke for life in the shape of a revenge, no palpable wrong which he could identify, nor practical blow that would help him a little, or which he could even pretend might help him. Therefore the nobility of a struggle is wanting in him. More grandly, on nobler lines, and with a more majestic modelling, the poet has worked out his fatally illuminated, disenchanted, disappointed, heroic soul. Let shallow Laertes storm for his vengeance, but in the profound depths of Hamlet’s nature there is no more room for delusion. As Macbeth murdered sleep, so has villany murdered truth, the soul of the world; but that last and awful murder is not to be made up for by the death of the villain. That is trivial, a nothing, a momentary anodyne, a little salve put to the burning of the heart-deep wound: but no remedy; for remedy is beyond possibility, beyond even hope.

This in our opinion is the interpretation of Hamlet, so far as his great and noble manhood is capable of a set interpretation. All through the darkness that has closed round him there strike flickerings of a former light, which show the real nature, instinct with grace and sweetness,

of his character. When he is first presented to us, his “inky cloak” is not more new to him than is the gloom that envelops his life. This gloom dates back but these two little months—not two: nay, perhaps not more than half that period: since the secret horrors that lie beneath the surface of common living first burst upon him—not in his father’s death, a natural sorrow, but in the monstrous inconstancy and wantonness of his mother. Before that unparalleled revelation of evil came, what had Prince Hamlet been?

“The glass of fashion and the mould of form :

The expectancy and rose of the fair state :”—

the very hope and flower of noble youth in Denmark. It is easy to collect the traces of that light and sweet existence after it is past. The warmth of his faith in the one last prop that remains to him, his faithful Horatio, is at the first moment scarcely less ready and genial than his salutation of the other friends who are not true: “Good lads, how do ye both?” he cries, with happy frankness, to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, before he has seen the treachery in their faces; and when he has begun to suspect that treachery, with what pathos of recollection does he remind them of the time in which there was no suspicion, adjuring them “by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love”! This is no melancholy philosopher above the range of the young cavaliers, the soldiers and scholars of Wittenberg; but a true comrade—one whose superior rank made him only more generous in his brotherhood, more dependent upon their affection. And it is by means of the happy likings of his youth that almost all

the machinery of the drama is constructed. The players are brought to him naturally, as to the source of patronage and favour. They had been of his retinue before, and he knows each one, and has a gracious word for the hobbledohoy who plays the women's parts, as well as for the leader of the troupe, whose emotion at his own performance fills the prince with a sad yet not unamused wonder. If he had not been their constant patron, and known their capacity of old, the expedient of the play could not have come in. And the very climax of the tragedy is procured by similar means. Even in the midst of his great gloom and overthrow, Hamlet is still capable of being piqued by the brag of Laertes' proficiency in fencing, which proves that such an accomplishment was of price with him. But for this there would have been no appropriateness in the king's wager on his head. It is "a very riband in the cap of youth," part of "the light and careless living" of the blooming season. Strange words to be applied to Hamlet! yet so true that the skill of a rival has still sufficient force to kindle the half-quenched fire of youthful emulation in him, notwithstanding all his burdens. Last of all, there is the trifling of early love—less love than fancy—shaped upon the fantastic models of the reigning fashion, which Hamlet had not been too serious to play with, like his contemporaries. The letter which Polonius reads to the king and queen is such a letter as Sir Percie Shafton might have written, the lightest traffic of love-making, half sport, half earnest,—all youthful extravagance and compliment. "To my soul's idol, the beautified Ophelia,"—"an ill phrase, a very vile phrase," as Polonius justly adds. This gay essay of gallantry is precisely what Laertes

calls it in his early advice to his sister, "a fashion and a toy in blood;" it is nothing more than "the trifling of his favour." "Perhaps he loves you now," the prudent brother says; but it is the light fancy of youth, the inclination of nature in its crescent, not any guarantee for what may be when "the inward service of the mind and soul" has attained its full width and growth. Still more decided upon this point is Polonius. "For Lord Hamlet, believe so much in him that he is young," says the wary old chamberlain. He has been a dangerous young gallant, a noble prince full of all the charms and entertainments of his age; surrounded by gay comrades, soldier and courtier and scholar; ready for every fresh amusement, to hear everything new the players have on hand, to try his skill against whoever offers, to wear a fair lady's favour in his cap. Such has been the golden youth of the Prince of Denmark: until suddenly, all at once, as at the crack of doom, the mask has broken off the fair face of the world, and Hamlet has made the irredeemable discovery that nothing is as it seems.

It might be too long to attempt to show how the foundations of the world were more entirely broken up by the special guise in which this calamity overtook him, than they could have been to Hamlet in any other. There is indeed scarcely any way in which the whole keynote of nature could have been changed to him except this. It could be done to Othello by the supposed falsehood of the woman in whom his life had reblossomed, who was his consolation for all the labours of existence; but no falsehood of love could have struck to despair the young man only lightly stepping within the primrose path of dalliance, and capable of no tragic passion there.

Where he could be struck was in the very fountain of his life—his mother. The most degraded mind finds a certain refuge there. A woman by very right of maternity is lifted out of the impurities and suspicions which may assail even those who are “as chaste as ice, as pure as snow.” She has a shield cast before her to quench all evil thoughts. If truth fails everywhere else, yet in her there is the source, the springs of unpolluted life, the fountain of honour, the one original type of faithful affection which cannot be doubted, even if heaven and earth were melting and dissolving. While that foundation stands fast, the world must still stand; it cannot fall into irremediable ruin and destruction. When Hamlet first comes before us in “the customary suit of sober black,” which is in itself a protestation against that unnatural marriage, this entire revolution of heaven and earth has happened to him. He is dragged in the train of the pageant, witnessing his mother’s re-enthronement, looking on at all the endearments of her monstrous bridehood, sick with disgust and misery, unable to turn his back upon it all, or save himself from the dishonour that invades his own veins from hers. “Fie on’t! O fie!” he cries, with a loathing which involves all the world, and even himself, in its sick horror. The earth is

“An unweeded garden,
That grows to seed; things rank, and
gross in nature,
Possess it merely.”

Foulness is everywhere. Oh that he could but melt and dissolve away—that it could be permitted to him to be no longer, to get done with the very consciousness of living. “Heaven and earth!” he cries, in the impatience of his wretchedness, “must I remember?”—

“Within a month,—
Let me not think on’t.—Frailty, thy
name is woman!
A little month; or ere those shoes were
old,
With which she follow’d my poor father’s
body,
Like Niobe, all tears;—why she, even
she,—
O God! a beast, that wants discourse of
reason,
Would have mourned longer.”

This horrible revelation of evil in the place where it should have been least suspected, this certainty which nothing can change or excuse or atone for, is the foundation of all that follows. The murder is less, not more than this. It may be proved, it may be revenged, and in any case it gives a feverish energy to the sufferer, an escape for the moment from a deeper bitterness still; but even were it disproved or were it avenged, it would change nothing. The worst that can happen has happened; that first discovery which makes every other possible has been made. How it is gradually supplemented by other treacheries, and how the noble victim finds himself surrounded by every cheat that is most appalling to his nature, all chiming in, with one baseness after another, is in our judgment the real argument of the tragedy—ending as it does in an imbroglio of heaped falsehood upon falsehood, confusion of murderous lie on lie, which leads to the only end that is possible—an end of universal slaughter, embodying at once the utter success and failure of multiplied treachery, not capable of stopping when it would. The murder is brought into the foreground, arresting the attention of the spectator, holding the chief place for a time, then utterly disappearing during the last act as if it had not been—because it is, in fact, not the central strain of the drama at all, but only a tremendous complication giving life and temporary vigour to the

hero's terrible illumination and despair.

Let us endeavour to trace this under-swell of dark and accumulating misery through the play. Hamlet is, in fact, roused into heroic action whenever the question of his father's murder is really before him: he vacillates about his vengeance; but in the great scenes with the ghost, the arrangements for the players, and also the interview with his mother, there is neither hesitation nor weakness about him. It is when outside the range of that inspiring excitement that the darker misery seizes possession of his soul; and this we think we shall be able to show. As for the madness which he has declared it to be his intention to simulate, we see very little of that on the stage or in the text. We are left to infer that he must have carried out his own suggestions of policy ("I perchance hereafter may think meet to put an antic disposition on"), by the fact that immediately after the scene with the ghost (in which there is certainly no madness) we plunge almost at once into the talk of the court about "Lord Hamlet's lunacy." This appears to have developed so gradually, as to have left the king and queen time to send to Wittenberg for Rosencrantz and Guildenstern; but the only evidence we have of it is the report which the frightened Ophelia brings to her father of the strange visit the prince has paid her as she was "sewing in her closet." Ophelia, to judge by the admonitions of her relatives, had not been by any means disinclined to admit the wooing of Hamlet. "You have of your audience been most free and bounteous," says her father—a prudent man though an ambitious:—

"From this time

Be somewhat scanter of your maiden presence;

Set your entreatment at a higher rate
Than a command to parley."

The simple and submissive girl, most shallow of all Shakespeare's women—who is, throughout her brief career before us, entirely unconscious, it is evident, of any claim of loyalty in love, and who thinks a great deal more of her father's approbation than of what is due to Hamlet—gives us in reality the only thing that approaches to evidence of madness on his part. "O my lord, my lord, I have been so affrighted!" she cries, rushing with a child's simple impulse to her father.

"Lord Hamlet,—with his doublet all unbrac'd;

No hat upon his head; his stockings foul'd,

Ungarter'd, and down-gyved to his ankle;
Pale as his shirt; his knees knocking
each other,

And with a look so piteous in purport,
As if he had been loosed out of hell,
To speak of horrors,—he comes before me.

Pol. Mad for thy love?

Oph. My lord, I do not know;
But, truly, I do fear it.

Pol. What said he?

Oph. He took me by the wrist, and held me hard;

Then goes he to the length of all his arm;
And, with his other hand thus o'er his brow,

He falls to such perusal of my face,
As he would draw it. Long stay'd he so;
At last,—a little shaking of mine arm,
And thrice his head thus waving up and down,—

He raised a sigh so piteous and profound,
As it did seem to shatter all his bulk,
And end his being: that done, he lets
me go;

And, with his head over his shoulder turn'd,

He seem'd to find his way without his eyes;

For out o' doors he went without their help,

And, to the last, bended their light on me."

Curiously enough, this is the only single bit of evidence in the whole

play which, we venture to say, would be received by any court as proof of Hamlet's madness. His own light and bitter "chaff" with Polonius would take in no lawyer. Whether it might be that in the interval which takes place behind the scenes, Hamlet had perceived that the sweet, childish nature of Ophelia had been taken possession of by the old courtier, and that she was a real, if innocent, snare for him, it is hard to tell; but it is scarcely possible for the reader to imagine a delusion more absurd than that the great and princely Hamlet had gone mad for the love of Ophelia. Though her pretty simplicity and hapless fate give a factitious interest to her, it is manifest that this soft submissive creature, playing into her father's hands as she does, is in no way a possible mate for Hamlet; neither does he say a word which would justify us in thinking that any serious passion for her increased the confusion of pain and misery in his mind. Perhaps that long perusal of her face, of which she tells her father, was the regretful, tender leave-taking of the man from whom all toys and fashions of the blood had fallen away, who could write sonnets no longer, nor rhymes to his lady's eyebrow. Anyhow, the fact remains that during the time which elapsed between Hamlet's resolution to "put an antic disposition on," and the arrival of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern at the request of the king, the events upon which the notion of Hamlet's madness has been built had taken place, and that all we know of them is this report of Ophelia's. He has, it would appear, "borne himself strange and odd," as he said he would do, and Polonius has found out the reason on his side, and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern have been sent for to do it on theirs.

When Hamlet appears to us again, he is mocking Polonius with wild talk—talk so full of meaning and mischief, that even the old chamberlain with his foregone conclusion in his head, is fain to give vent to the confession, "though this be madness, yet there's method in't." This transparent assumption of folly blows off the moment he sees the new-comers, whom he meets at first with the frankest pleasure. "Sure I am, there are not two men living to whom he more adheres," the queen has said; and the reception which Hamlet gives them fully carries out his mother's description. But either there is something in their air which prompts suspicion, or the new-born doubts in his mind make him question closely, "What make you at Elsinore?" Alas! the generous and truthful Hamlet has now got that light of bitter illumination in his eyes which sees through all disguises. In a little keen quick play of persistent question and unwilling reply, he has got the secret of their mission. He accepts that too: his friends have fallen away from him, and turned into spies and emissaries of his foe. The rest of the interview with these false friends is wrought with the most marvellous skill: the suppressed passion in it mingled with that levity of the sick heart which is more sad than despair. At first he seems to make almost an appeal to their sympathies, when he tells them how he has "lost all my mirth, foregone all custom of exercises;" but seeing this does not move one spark of the old fellow-feeling within them, Hamlet accepts the position, this time with a smile of bitter yet tranquil understanding. That which would have been so great an evil, so miserable a disaster before—what is it now but a faint echo of the downfall already

accomplished? Fate having already done her worst, this bitterness the more but chimes in like an anticipated refrain. Yet the pain of it tells even in the greater anguish, and rises to a climax of indignant remonstrance when, after the hypocritical appeal his false friends make to his old affection, Hamlet, scorn-
 ing to give them more distinct reply, takes the "recorder" from the hands of the player and offers it first to one, then to the other. "Will you play upon this pipe?" he says; "'tis as easy as lying: govern these ventages with your fingers and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent music." "Why, look you, now," he adds, "how unworthy a thing you make of me! You would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery. . . . 'Sblood, do you think I am easier to be played on than a pipe?" Mr Irving in a fury—quite out of character, we think, with the concentrated scorn and pain, the pang yet smile of the outburst which is far too sad for passion—breaks violently across his knee the "little organ," which appears to those shallow deceivers so much more difficult to understand than Hamlet's great heart and nature. But passion or violence is not in the contrast between the simple pipe and the man's soul. It leaves them confounded, poor creatures as they are—yet still not altogether sure, so great is the forbearance of his protest, notwithstanding the reluctant contempt in it—that they may not yet deceive him again, and get the better of him, and worm their way into his secret. In no part of the play is his attitude more noble—high as the heavens above the falsehood which is wringing his very heart, yet deeply, profoundly conscious of it—

than in those scenes. His first disenchantment has been so complete, and has cut the ground so entirely from under his feet, that this is no new revelation to him. He bears it even, standing there alone, on so much solid ground as his feet can cover, no more, with a smile—but the smile is one of utter and inexpressible pain.

There remains but one thing in which Hamlet might still find a shred of truth and faithfulness. According to our opinion Ophelia has always been too slight and small a creature to have much hold upon such a spirit—and his perpetual gibes and flouts at Polonius, specially on the subject of his daughter, would be cruel, had he not an idea that some plot or other in respect to his daughter was brewing in the old courtier's mind; but when the deepest musings of his sadness are disturbed by the entrance of that last and cruellest spy upon him, Hamlet does not seem at first to contemplate the possibility that Ophelia too might be in the plot against him. Her evidently concerted appearance at that moment, a calculated chance to secure the prince's attention, rouses him from thoughts so different that he perceives her with a passing impatience. And it is hard to believe that even Ophelia is conscious of the full meaning of the snare which she is made to set. Something of simplicity, something of stupidity, is in the device—which is probably all her own, and suggested by the other conspirators—of bringing Hamlet's love-tokens to restore to him at such a moment and under such circumstances. Though she thinks he is mad of love for herself, and though she knows that her father and the king are lying in watch to listen, she tempts her crazed lover, as she imagines, to betray his most secret

feelings, by those soft reproaches, which at another place and time would have been so affecting—appeals to his tenderest recollections, and pathetic protest against his abandonment of her. A woman forsaken could not do more in a supreme effort to reclaim the heart that has strayed from her. Her faltering reference to the “words of so sweet breath composed as made the things more rich,” the faint and plaintive indignation of her conclusion, “Rich gifts wax poor, when givers prove unkind,” would be exquisitely touching did we not know of those spies behind the arras. They are exquisitely touching, we believe, to the great part of the public, who, soft-hearted to the soft Ophelia, forget that this whole meeting is a plot, and that she has contrived, in her simplicity, a still more delicate refinement of the snare, by thus throwing upon him the sudden shadow of the past. For a moment Hamlet seems to pause. “I humbly thank you, well, well, well,” he says, in answer to her question, with something in his tone of fear, lest this softness should melt him, and his steps be tempted into a way less rude and terrible than that which lies before him. But when the meaning of the whole situation suddenly flashes upon him—when his rapid glance detects the listeners at one side, while the seeming-simple maiden falters forth her reproaches on the other—a blaze of sudden scorn and wrath suddenly illuminates the scene. A stab delivered by so soft a hand cuts to the heart. She too, suborned by his enemies, made into a trap for him, endeavouring to seduce him to a self-betrayal more intimate, more sacred, than any that his false friends could hope to attain! The pang is so keen that Hamlet is cruel and terrible to the soft and shrinking

creature. He rails at her as if she were a wanton, and crushes her under his contempt. “Go thy ways to a nunnery—to a nunnery—go!” he cries, with, for the first time, a shrill tone of anger in his voice. She to whose orisons he commends himself one moment, is denounced the next in terms as harsh and disdainful as were ever used to the most abandoned sinner. His words beat her down like a hailstorm on a flower. He has no pity—no mercy. That combination of the last appeal to his tenderness with the concealed and cruel plot against him betrays Hamlet to an outburst which under less provocation would be unmanly. He insults the woman who has made a snare for him out of her own very tenderness. The exquisite art which keeps up our sympathy for the bewildered and crushed Ophelia, notwithstanding what would be the baseness of her disloyalty were she sufficiently elevated in character to understand the treacherous part she is playing, is wonderful. It leaves a haze of mortal uncertainty about her character altogether, such as veils the actual being of our contemporaries, and leaves us at liberty to think better or worse of them according to the point of view from which we see them,—a licence which has secured for Ophelia a place among Shakespeare’s heroines which does not seem to be justified by anything but the prettiness and pathos of her mad scenes. Her submissive obedience to every impulse from her father scarcely balances her absolute want of perception of any truth or delicacy which she owes to Hamlet, for whose betrayal she allows herself, without apparent resistance, to be made the decoy.

Thus the last blow that Fortune can now strike at him has fallen—his friends have abandoned him;

his simple love, the innocent creature in whom, if no lofty passion was possible, there still seemed every commendation to sweet domestic trust and truth, has done her best to betray him. What remains for this man to whom all the world has turned traitor, under whose feet the solid soil has crumbled, who sees nothing but yawning ruin round him, abysses of darkness, bottomless pits of falsehood, wherever he may turn?

This, it seems to us, is the deepest and chief strain in the tragedy. The murder and the vengeance he would take for it, would his sick heart leave him enough possibility of living to give the necessary standing-ground for the blow—form the sole source of energy and life which he retains. That cruel and monstrous wrong, for which he can yet get some amends, rouses him from the deadly collapse of every hope and wish which he cannot escape, which nothing in heaven or earth can remedy. The passion of the great scene with the ghost brings before us another Hamlet, a heroic figure, altogether awakened out of the sick and miserable musing, the impotent still anger and pain of his previous appearance. “Remember thee?” he cries; “ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat in this distracted globe.” And the wild humour of his excitement as he makes his companions swear to secrecy, is not more unlike the bitter satire of hopeless despondency with which in a previous scene he explains his mother’s marriage as “thrift, thrift, pure thrift”—than is the roused and passionate fervour of his action from the apathy of spectatorship in which we have seen him plunged from the first. Again, the gleam of revival which occurs when the players present themselves, and he perceives a ready means in his

hand of convicting the criminal, confirming the apparition, and striking a first and subtle blow, once more restores force and life to Hamlet. There is no vacillation in his measures then. How prompt, how ready, how practical are all his combinations! Once more he is delivered from the deadly influence of that eating falsehood, and truth becomes possible.

“I have heard
That guilty creatures sitting at a play,
Have by the very cunning of the scene
Been struck so to the soul, that presently
They have proclaim’d their malefactions.
For murder, though it have no tongue,
Will speak
With most miraculous organ.”

After the terrible success of this experiment, we are not left time to see any further faltering of purpose. The events follow in breathless succession. The great scene with his mother and the killing of Polonius take place the same evening—and that very night or the morning immediately succeeding, without pause or delay, he is swept away to England on the expedition from which the king hopes he may never return. The “vacillation” with which Hamlet is continually credited, and of which so much has been said, is all confined to the untold period between the appearance of the ghost and the point at which the story resumes, with the treacheries of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, and of Ophelia. After he has made sure by the trial to which he subjects his uncle at the play, of the guilt of the king, Hamlet, save at the moment when he surprises the criminal on his knees, and decides not to kill him, has no further opportunity for vacillation. And here the sustained action of the tragedy may be said to end. The last act is a bewildering postscript, in which all the mysteries of the previous close and elaborate piece of

tragedy are swept up. It might be almost a new play, so different is it—or the beginning of a continuation which shows us all the former occurrences thrown into distance and perspective. Of the original actors none remain except Hamlet himself, the king and queen, and the two lay figures of Horatio and Laertes. Ophelia is gone, all her simplicities and artless treachery ended in a pretty foolish madness as much unlike the “lunacy of the Lord Hamlet” as can be conceived; and old Polonius, wagging his wise old head in shallow sagacity; and the young court friends, who cannot understand their princely companion, but can betray him—all are swept away. And with them has gone Hamlet’s despair, and his plan of vengeance, and all those obstinate questionings with which he has endeavoured to blow aside the veil of human uncertainty. We tread new ground, and enter a new contracted, less impassioned world.

All this time, though we have discussed Hamlet much, we have given but little attention to Mr Irving, though it is his performance which has furnished the text of the disquisition. Notwithstanding the very serious and conscientious performance he gives us, it is very difficult to judge what is the conception he has formed of the character of Hamlet. He would seem rather to have studied the drama scene by scene, endeavouring with all his powers to give what seems to him an adequate representation of each, than to have addressed himself to the character as a whole. And though there are general criticisms of the superficial kind to be addressed to him, such as the very natural and reasonable objection to the language he speaks, which certainly is quite as imperfect English as that which any foreigner may have made use of—we are prevent-

ed by our inability to discriminate what his idea is, from finding any fault with that idea. He wants humour so entirely, that the wild pathetic gleams of diversion which light up the gloom are lost to his audience; and the laugh which breaks in at the most bitter moments—that laugh which is full of tears, yet is nevertheless instinct with a wildly humorous perception of things ludicrous and incongruous—loses all its distinctive character, and becomes a mere hysterical symbol of excessive emotion, no more expressive than a shriek. And he wants the flexibility, the ready change from one mood to another, the rapidity of transition which bewilders Hamlet’s commonplace companions. The broken jest, so strangely natural, yet to the vulgar eye so unsuited to the occasion, with which he hails the interruptions of the ghost—his fantastic fooling of Polonius—even the lighter touches between deadly jest and earnest with which his interview with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern is full—are all beyond Mr Irving’s power. And the wild outburst of tragic gaiety into which he breaks when the assembly is broken up after the play, becomes mere mad bellowing and screaming in Mr Irving’s hands, without any suggestion of that wavering of the mind at the very summit of tragic satisfaction, consternation, and horror, frantic with meaning, yet a world apart from madness, which is perhaps the furthest step humanity can take into what is expressible and capable of being put into words: it is a step beyond the actor’s powers. To embody the vicissitudes, the extremes, the heights and depths of this most wonderful of poetical creations, who could be sufficient who did not to some degree share Hamlet’s nature, his large eyesight, his comprehen-

sion of small and great, his susceptibility to every breath that flits across the mental horizon? This last quality apparently Mr Irving does not perceive at all; for we are sure that if he perceived it he would devote himself to a study of all the rippings of sensitive faces, all the transitions of changeable minds. His own countenance is at times finely expressive, but it has not been made for the flickerings of a mind at once spontaneous and complex. Its force is single, *uni*, not mingled but of one colour. Hamlet is too great to be called versatile, a word reserved by us for the use of characters of slighter mould; but there is all the gamut in him, and no difficulty in going at once from the height to the depth of the moral scale. But Mr Irving possesses no such varied power of expression; and this must always be fatally in his way when it is necessary to attempt those shades of meaning which are infinite, and which vary with every breath.

As an instance, however, of what seems to us complete misconception more serious than simple failure, we may instance the scene with Ophelia, which no doubt is one of the most difficult in the play. It is hard in any case (notwithstanding that the doctrine is popular) to give a persistent tone of superiority to a man's intercourse with a woman without offending the finer perceptions as well as the wholesome prejudices of the audience, which naturally range themselves on the woman's side; and it is still more difficult to show the turn of sentiment, and justify Hamlet's wild and sudden onslaught upon so soft and shrinking a nature. Mr Irving avoids this by turning the scene into one of the most impassioned and frantic love—love of gesture and attitude, since he can-

not change the words, which are as unlike love-making as ever were put on paper. His Hamlet can scarcely restrain himself from clasping Ophelia to his heart, his arms are all but closed around her, and when he turns himself away it is but to turn back, drawn by an attraction which it takes not only all his power of resolution but all his muscular force to resist. Those embracings of the air, those futile snatchings and withdrawals, are supposed to be proofs of a violent and passionate love, restrained or broken either by madness or by misery—Mr Irving does not clearly give us to understand which—but certainly belonging at least to a most robust sentiment, for even the sight of the half-concealed spectators, about whose presence it is impossible he can deceive himself, makes no difference to him; and he goes on with those wild half-embraces and the strangest pantomimic struggle of passion after he knows of the plot and treachery, making an exhibition of his feelings under the very noses of the watchers. From whence Mr Irving can have taken this extraordinary conception it is impossible to tell. It is contradicted not only by every word Hamlet says, but by the verdict of the spies after. "Love! his affections do not that way tend," says the king, more clear-sighted than Mr Irving; though, indeed, had Mr Irving been Hamlet (as, thank heaven! he is not), Polonius must have remained master of the field, since nothing could justify his mad behaviour but the old courtier's theory. There are many jarring notes in the performance, but none so entirely false as this.

On the equally delicate ground where Hamlet is confronted by the other treachery in the persons of Guildenstern and Rosencrantz, Mr Irving is much more happy. Though

he is incapable of the light banter which conceals so much tragic feeling, his intercourse with them is well done throughout, though somewhat extreme in gravity. The searching look, which is the first evidence of his doubts, follows very quickly upon his cordial recognition of his fellow-students; and the manner in which he penetrates through their shifting and paltry defences is fine in its reality and concentrated observation—a study as successful as the encounter with Ophelia is false. In the one case he has caught the true tone of the character, in the other goes wilfully against it, and against every indication of the text. The fine scene with the recorder, to which we have already referred, is somewhat spoiled by the violence with which he breaks, when he has served his purpose, the pipe which has proved so powerful an illustration of his meaning; but this is a detail which may easily be pardoned, all the rest being so satisfactory. By the way, the introduction of the recorder, not only in Mr Irving's arrangement, but in every other we have seen, is singularly artificial. Hamlet has demanded "some music—the recorders," in his wild exultation at the end of the play-scene, meaning evidently a performance of music to soothe or inspire his excited fancy, or to take the place of the entertainment so summarily interrupted. The recorder, however, is brought to him as if he had asked for it simply to give the courtiers their lesson, the idea of music to be performed before him failing altogether. Mr Irving's careful zeal for all these matters might well be exerted on this point to make the introduction of the instrument more natural.

That he does not think any detail trivial is apparent from his notes in a contemporary, the last of which is occupied with a defence of his own

practice in withdrawing the two portraits of traditionary use, which have hitherto figured in the queen's chamber, and afforded a visible text for Hamlet's speech—"Look here, upon this picture, and on this." Mr Irving's crotchet on this point is really unimportant; though it is somewhat confusing, we think, to the spectator, to have so distinct an allusion without any visible ground for it; and the suggestion he makes, that the stage has four walls, and that the portraits may be supposed to be hanging upon that which "is only theoretical"—which, in reality, is the theatre, with all its crowding faces—is somewhat ludicrous. The absence of the portraits, or of the miniatures which sometimes do duty for them, weakens the force of the speech, in so far as any failure of external accessories *can* weaken it, which is a trivial quantity. But this accessory to which the text seems to point is, on the whole, more important than the chamber-candle which Hamlet, with real attention, lights and hands to his mother at the conclusion of the interview, neglecting, however, as we cannot but feel, to remind her of the night-gear, evidently airing at the fire, which gives truth and local colour to the room; though, after all, it is not the queen's bedroom, but only some boudoir *appartenance*, or there would be no need for the chamber-candle at all. The scene which takes place in this room is strangely lopped and cut; something it may be necessary to omit in deference to modern modesties, but these are somewhat too much regarded in a scene of passion so intense. And the sudden vehemence of Hamlet's action, when the voice behind the arras rouses him into wild rapidity of impulse, leaving no time for thought, loses all its force in Mr Irving's treatment. He lifts the arras before he strikes,

making any doubt about the person of the victim impossible, and taking the meaning out of his own question, "Is it the king?" It must be remembered that he has come there still breathless with the wild emotion of the play-scene; that he has passed, on his way, through the oratory where the king is praying, and has spared him; and that the transport of sudden passion with which he rushes at the concealed spectator is a payment of long arrears to the arch-enemy, who had already used this same mean device to surprise his thoughts. We cannot tell why Mr Irving should have cut out two lines of the words addressed to the dead Polonius, which are far from unnecessary:—

"Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool,
farewell!

I took thee for thy better; *take thy fortune;*

Thou find'st to be too busy is some danger"—

is what Shakespeare wrote; but Mr Irving omits the italics, leaving the victim without even so much disdainful regret as this.

Altogether ludicrous, too, is the appearance of the ghost in this very important scene. The convolutions of the queen's night-drapery, which, so far as she is concerned, occupy the most prominent place in the scene, billowing hither and thither as she is affected by Hamlet's vituperations, had, we confess, so occupied our mind, that when, with a rush, a venerable gentleman in familiar domestic costume came on the stage, shaking it with substantial footsteps, the idea of the ghost did not present itself at all to our dull imagination; and it was impossible to avoid the natural idea that the lady's husband, hearing an unaccountable commotion in the next room, had jumped out of bed, seized his dressing-gown, and rushed in to see what was the

matter. The combination of this and the chamber-candle which Hamlet lights so carefully, and the night-gown airing at the fire, is most unfortunate. These accessories are a great deal more prosaic than the introduction of pictures would be; and we cannot but wonder that the actor who leaves so much to imagination at one moment, should leave so little to it at another.

There are many omissions, too, which seem distinct faults in the presentation, diminishing its effect—as, for instance, at the end of the play-scene, where the alarmed phrases exchanged by the spectators occupy the moment necessary to show us the king's perturbation, before the whole train suddenly rushes away, and everything is over. Here is the version of Shakespeare:—

"*Ham.* He poisons him i' the garden for's estate. His name's Gonzago: the story is extant, and writ in choice Italian. You shall see anon how the murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

Oph. The king rises.

Ham. What! frightened with false fire?

Queen. How fares my lord?

Pol. Give o'er the play.

King. Give me some light:—away!

All. Lights, lights, lights!"

Mr Irving leaves out all that we have put in italics, thus gaining nothing in point of time, and entirely missing the confused consciousness of the spectators, which helps the effect of the scene so greatly. As it is now being represented, the king's exclamation, and the echoing cry of the courtiers for lights, are all that is interposed between the sudden flight of the court and Hamlet's explanation of the argument of the play. His own outcry, "What! frightened with false fire?" is transposed, and comes after the precipitate withdrawal of the royal party. Thus the effect of three independent witnesses to the

king's conviction and remorse, each breaking in spontaneously, with a rising excitement which makes the rush of the departure infinitely more telling and lifelike, is entirely lost. And no counterbalancing advantage is gained by the omission of these few but pregnant phrases, which do not delay but only elucidate the action. We cannot understand, either, why of Hamlet's wild doggerel the verse which is universally known and full of meaning, should be omitted, while the second mad rhyme is retained :

“Why, let the stricken deer go weep,
The hart ungalled play,”

is as fit an expression of the wild feeling of the moment as could be found ; whereas the jingle that is retained is a mere maddening clatter of words, expressive enough of the frantic levity of passion when taken in conjunction with the other, but far less worthy of preservation than the other. We fail also to perceive any reason for leaving out one of the best-known lines in the Ghost's address to Hamlet, “Unhousel'd, disappointed, unanel'd.” Perhaps there is no single line in the whole play the omission of which would so strike the most careless listener. It is like leaving out a bar in a strain of music, and withdraws our mind from the rest of the speech into involuntary investigation of the mystery of this incomprehensible “cut.” Why, except to make us stumble and distract our attention, should this have been left out ?

The omission of the scene in the oratory, the king's prayer and Hamlet's fierce and momentary self-discussion thereanent, is perhaps less to be complained of. We sincerely sympathise with Mr Irving in the grievous disappointments he must encounter in the persons of his kings. The Shakespearian monarch

is a being by himself ; and how to get him to look—not like a king, but—like anything better than a hobby-horse, must be a labour of Hercules such as only managers fully appreciate. It is much better to leave the scene out altogether than to associate only ludicrous ideas with it. A gentleman whose chief thought when he kneels is about the knees of his “tights,” and who goes on serenely saying his prayers while the avenger rants and waves a torch within a foot of him, is better left out when he can be left out. Indeed their majesties of Denmark at the Lyceum must be almost as great an exercise to Mr Irving's soul as were their originals to Hamlet. The swing of their respective mantles, especially that fine wave of white silk lining from the monarch's shoulder, is the chief point that strikes us. As for the queen, the manner in which her majesty swathes herself in her red and yellow night-gown during the exciting scene in her chamber, making its billows and puffings do duty for the emotion she shows but little trace of otherwise, is probably due to some archæological instructions previously administered by Hamlet, rather than to any inspiration of her own. We cannot, however, pass over the *personnel* of the drama without saying something of Miss Ellen Terry's Ophelia. No Ophelia of our time has given to the character so graceful a presence. The very excellence of the actress, however, makes more apparent the insignificance of the part allotted to her. Nothing can make the submissive little daughter of Polonius a great poetical heroine. All the prejudices of the audience are in her favour, and we have grown up with the idea that she ranks among the Juliets and Rosalinds ; and, unfortunately, it has been very easy on most occasions to assure ourselves that our disap-

pointment arose solely from the incapacity of the actresses to whom (a necessity for a singing voice being in itself a limitation to the number of Ophelias possible) the part was intrusted. But now that we have a representative to whom no exception can be made, this delusion fails us. Even Miss Terry cannot give more than the mildest interest to the character. What she can do she does; though even the sweet and animated archness of her countenance, though capable of touching pathos, would be more adapted for a Rosalind full of life and action, than for the plaintive weakness of Ophelia.

The last act of "*Hamlet*" remains to ourselves a mystery. We cannot attempt to discuss what we so little understand. Had not Shakespeare been writing plays for an audience to which an orthodox ending was necessary—had not even the supreme creator laboured under that necessity for a third volume with which critics upbraid the smaller artists of fiction—it is likely enough that he would have left this tale unfinished, as it is at the end of the fourth act. There is no end practicable for such a hero. Death indeed cuts the thread artificially both in real life and poetry; but it is an artificial ending, however it comes about, and, so far as we are concerned, solves no problem, though we make bold to believe that it explains everything to the person chiefly concerned. In the fifth act all is changed. That former world has rolled away with all its passions and pains. Hamlet, having delivered himself by the promptest energetic action, in an emergency which is straightforward and without complications, comes back with a languor and exhaustion about him which contrasts strangely with the intensity of all his previous emo-

tions. Contemplative as ever, there is no longer any strain of mystic anguish in his musings. Unaccountably, yet most evidently, the greatness of his suffering has dissolved away. He walks into the scene like a man recovered from an illness—like one who has been dreaming and is awake, a sadder and a wiser man than he was only yesternight. His speculations in the churchyard are all in a lower key. Instead of those sublime questionings of earth and heaven which formed the burden of all his thoughts—instead of the passion of disenchantment and cruel consciousness of treachery and falsehood—the flight of his subdued fancy goes no higher than the base uses to which the dust of humanity may return. True, he starts into spasmodic excitement when roused by the ranting of Laertes over his sister's grave, and meets him with an outburst of responsive ranting, in which there is a gleam of his old wild humour, though subdued like himself to a lower tone. "The bravery of his grief did put me into a towering passion," he exclaims afterwards to Horatio; and his sudden irritation and outdoing of the swagger of his natural opponent is the thing most like the Hamlet of old in the whole postscriptal episode. So also in a mild degree is the scene with the young euphuist Osric, where prince and courtier give us a dialogue in the manner of Lyly, according to the fashion of Elizabeth's time rather than Hamlet's, wonderfully reduced and tamed from the wild and brilliant play of the prince with Polonius in the previous acts. Throughout the growing rapidity of action with which all things tend towards the catastrophe, Hamlet bears himself with noble and unsuspecting dignity; while the last murderous network of deceit, which is compass-

ing his death, closes round him. The hand of fate is upon him, his insight is clouded with a great weariness, his deep soul subdued. It does not occur to him apparently to ask why this wager of the king's, or for what purpose he, of all men in the world, is backed up and set forth as his champion by his natural enemy. He walks this time calmly, with melancholy grace, into the snare.

Thus Hamlet dies, as he has suffered, by fraud. Treachery has tracked him from the beginning of the great and melancholy story. It has broken his heart, it has untwisted for him all the ties of nature, it has made love and friendship into delusions, and life itself a troubled dream. What is the secret of the subdued dead hush and calm with which he comes before us in the end? Is it mere weariness, exhaustion of all possibility of action, the sense that nothing more remains worth struggling for—for even his revenge, the one object which had kept the channels of life clear, has disappeared in the last chapter? Who can tell? only at the very end does a gleam of the old passion flash in his face, as he at last accomplishes that vengeance, and sends his enemy before him into the land of retribution. So far as our theory goes, the last act is in fact the

return of the poet to his real theme. His hero has been wrecked throughout by treachery. The higher betrayals that affected his heart and soul wrung Hamlet's being, and transformed the world to him: but the meaner tricks that assailed his life were too low for his suspicion. How was he, so noble, so unfortunate, measuring his soul against the horrible forces of falsehood, the spiritual wickedness in high places, to come down from that impassioned and despairing contest, to think of poison, or take precautions against it? Thus the traitor got the better of him, and death triumphed at the last.

There is nothing to object to in Mr Irving's performance of this last portion of the play. It suits him better than all that has gone before. The anachronism which we believe experts find in the exhibition of a modern scientific manner of fencing, which could not have existed in the vague traditionary days of Hamlet the Dane, is but a trifling and scholarly grievance, and there is no complication of passions to carry these scenes beyond the actor's range. If he would dispense with the ludicrous head-dress which is half like Mephistopheles and half like a gipsy woman, we should feel that Mr Irving's churchyard scene was as satisfactory a rendering as we are likely to attain.

CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE.

V. BIOGRAPHY, TRAVEL, AND SPORT.

NOTHING is more fascinating than good biography, and assuredly it is the more precious for its rarity. The books we really love, the books that make the illustrious dead our friends and companions, and which may be carried about with one like the Bible or Shakespeare, may almost be counted on the fingers. That is at first blush the more surprising, since it seems there should be no very insuperable difficulty in writing an excellent life. Fidelity of portraiture, sympathy, and tact, with a discriminating use of ample materials, ought surely to be sufficient to assure success. As a matter of fact, it evidently is not so. Clever and congenial biographers take up the pen to turn out the volumes which are read or merely glanced through and laid aside. Perhaps, when we say "volumes," we have gone some way towards the explanation. For there can be no question that the most common defects of biography are useless repetition and provoking redundancy. The more earnestly the biographer throws himself into his task, the more indispensable does each trivial detail appear to him. In working out the features and the figure of his subject, he is slow to reject anything as inconsequent or insignificant. Then he is in even a worse position than the editor of a daily newspaper. He should make up his mind to seem ungracious and ungrateful. He must say "No" civilly to people who have been doing him a kindness, when he declines to make use of the valued matter they have placed at his disposal as the greatest of favours. He has been indefatigably collecting a

mass of voluminous correspondence from a great variety of quarters; yet many of the letters, when they come to be read, are either unimportant or really reproductions of each other. He gets into the way of going about his labours like the watchmaker, who works with a powerful magnifying-glass in his eye. In the assiduous attention he bestows on each step in the career, he is apt to lose all sense of proportion; while in the unconscious exercise of their natural critical powers, his readers become unpleasantly alive to the results.

We need hardly say that our complaints of the average quality of biography do not extend to the quantity of these publications. There is no lack of the "Lives," bad, fair, and indifferent, of big and little men. Not a few of these we may owe to selfish motives; but for the most of them we are undoubtedly indebted to love, gratitude, or friendship. Now and then the office of elegist or literary executor may well excite an eager rivalry among those who can put forward any reasonable pretensions to it. There are splendid examples of reputations made vicariously by laying hold of the mantle of some illustrious man. Boswell's 'Johnson' is an instance which must of course occur to everybody. His is a book that stands alone and unapproached. We subscribe to what Macaulay wrote in his essay, that "Eclipse is first, and the rest nowhere;" although we can by no means agree with the brilliant essayist in his contemptuously depreciatory estimate of the biographer.

That Boswell's fortunate weaknesses went far to insure him his astonishing triumph is not to be denied for a moment. It is seldom, indeed, that one finds in an educated man of the world, who was indisputably possessed of ordinary intelligence, so ludicrous a mixture of shrewdness and simplicity; such a *naïve* indifference to mortifying rebuffs, and so complacent a superiority to humiliating self-exposure. It is rarer still to find an appreciative enthusiast, who, rather than not show the powers of his idol at their best, will set himself up to be shot at with poisoned arrows. But those who, going on the estimate of Macaulay, should try to rival the achievement of Boswell by simply putting self-respect and self-esteem in their pocket, and letting one form of vanity swallow all the rest, may find themselves far astray in their expectations. Boswell can have been by no means the nonentity it has pleased Macaulay to represent him. Far better judges have differed entirely from the brilliant Whig partisan when he declares that no one of Boswell's personal remarks would bear repetition for its own sake. Independently of the culture and various information they show, many of them strike us as extremely incisive—for in thought as well as in style he had borrowed much from his model. Not unfrequently the remarks are epigrammatic, and almost invariably they are ingeniously suggestive. If Boswell was no great lawyer, he had a genius for one important branch of the profession. He was a master of insidious examination and cross-examination. He made it his business and study to "draw" the sparkling and bitter conversationalist, till he had acquired an intuitive perception of how to set about it, ready as he was to risk the hug of the bear. The direct

evidences of his talents must be matter of opinion, and each reader can form an independent judgment on them. But there is no gainsaying the indirect testimony to his merits in the illustrious company he habitually kept. It is unfair, and opposed to all probability, to suppose that the most refined intellectual society of the day merely tolerated the shadow of Johnson as their butt. Men like Burke and Reynolds, who, as Johnson would have said, had no great "gust" for humour, do not drag a "sot and idiot" about with them to quiet little dinners, with the simple notion of amusing themselves by his follies. We never hear that Foote formed one at their parties, though he was courted by such *spirituel roués* as the Delavals. But the most conclusive testimony to Boswell's powers is the pleasure Johnson took in his company. Johnson no doubt loved flattery; but he was ruffled by praise indiscreetly administered, and was the last man in the world to tolerate the intimacy of a bore. He was certainly no hypocrite; and, setting aside innumerable passages in his letters, he gave the most unmistakable proof of his consideration for Boswell, when he chose him for his companion in the tour to the Hebrides, and encouraged him in the intention of writing his life. If Boswell's 'Johnson' be the life of lives, we may be sure that no ordinary literary skill, disguised under great apparent simplicity, must have gone to the composition, with much of the talent for biography that can only be a natural gift. But when all has been said in the author's favour that can be said, aspirants should remember that he has been living in literature as the object of a fortunate accident and a still more happy conjunction. He suited

Johnson, dissimilar as they were, and the mind and qualities of the one man became the complements of those of the other. While if Johnson had followed up the famous snub at Cave's; if he had not taken a capricious fancy to the raw importation from the country he professed to detest, the Scotch advocate might have travelled to Corsica, strutted at the carnival at Stratford-on-Avon, and dined and drunk port with the wits, but he would never have emerged from obscurity in the remarkable book which claims more than a passing notice in any article on biography.

But if vanity and ambition have inspired many indifferent biographies, the partiality of love or friendship has to answer for many more. We are all familiar with the emotional mourners who will obtrude the heartfelt expressions of their grief and affection into the brief obituary notice in the newspaper, which is paid at so many shillings the line. So there are sorrowing widows and admiring intimates who seem to consider an elaborate memoir of the departed as much *de rigueur* as the tombstone that is to commemorate his gifts and his virtues. Very possibly he may have done something considerable for himself. Probably he was a most respectable member of society, and benefited his fellow-creatures in some shape or other. He has died in the fulness of years and regard; or a promising career has been prematurely cut short before it had well begun, or just as it seemed approaching fruition. In the latter case especially, the biographical tribute becomes a sacred duty. The literary legatee feels himself bound to turn architect, completing and embellishing in the realms of fancy the edifice that in actual fact had barely risen above the foundations. He has

accepted the duties that are pressed upon him with reluctance, real or feigned; though in his innermost heart he has hardly a doubt that he will discharge them something more than satisfactorily. Writing a life seems so exceedingly easy; indeed, undertaking it involves a certain self-sacrifice, seeing that it scarcely gives sufficient scope for the play of original genius. If regard or ambition did not sweeten the labour, and if the biographer did not show himself so confident in that genius of his, we should be inclined to feel sincere sympathy for him. For working out the most brilliant memoir must involve an inordinate amount of wearisome drudgery, while it lays the writer under an infinity of trifling obligations to people who are ready enough to remind him of them. Even if you employ a staff of secretaries and amanuenses, your own gifts of selection must be sorely taxed. If the object of your hero-worship was a busy man, the chances are that he wrote a villanous hand. As he should have had time to make a certain reputation, the odds are that he died in ripe maturity. So you have masses of crabbed manuscript consigned to you, in boxes and packets, and by single communications; and the earlier of these letters have been penned on old-fashioned paper, in ink that has been fading with time and damp. These date, moreover, from the days of prohibitory postage, and are written in the most minute of hands, and crossed and recrossed to the edge of the seal. If the talent of the departed lay in sentimental verse, or if he were a reforming or philosophical genius in embryo, of course they are magniloquently diffuse; and though you hardly dare reprint his rhapsodies in replica, you are loath to waste any of the flowers of his

eloquence. Most of us have been committed to some unpleasant piece of business where we have had to rake among the melancholy ashes of the past, undoing the moth-eaten tape that ties up the mildewed packets. Imagine having to pursue such a task indefinitely, with no particular point to aim at, but vaguely searching for appropriate matter. As it seems to us, only the most plodding and patient-minded of men would be content to persevere with unabated application; and it is comparatively seldom that acute and imperturbable patience is united to real literary ability. Should you happen to be blessed with a retentive memory, perhaps it may prove wisest in the end to trust to it in great measure; though in that case, undoubtedly, the probabilities are that you do very partial justice to the subject. Otherwise, with a view to comprehensive reference, you must make a careful *précis* of your researches as you go along, and that infers some deficiency in those faculties of memory and concentration which are essential to really superior work. Or else you must decide to print wholesale, making very perfunctory attempts at selection. The relatives who see your manuscript or revise your book in the proof, are sure to look leniently on that latter fault. Nothing, they think, is too insignificant to be recorded of a man so essentially superior and remarkable. And the result is a mass of ill-arranged matter, where the currants and spice bear no proportion to ingredients that are unpalatable and unpleasantly indigestible.

Turning to Mrs Glass's cookery-book for another metaphor, you must catch your hare before you cook him. The first condition of a good book is a suitable subject. It by no means follows that, because

a man has made his way to prominent places — because he has played a conspicuous part in public affairs — because he has been a shining light in the churches, and the most soul-stirring of pulpit orators — because he has held high commands in wars that have remodelled the map of the world — that his life must necessarily be worth the writing. A man may have high talents of a certain order, though he is no more than a fair representative of a class, and has never gone far beyond the commonplace. The test of a successful biography is the pleasure one takes in reading it; and to give it point and piquancy, the eminent subject must have shown some originality of genius or character. No doubt, a distinguished statesman or general must have been concerned in much that deserves to be recorded. But there the personal may be merged in the abstract, as biography drifts into history, which is a different department altogether: and not a few of those biographies which have become standard authorities, are in reality history in a flimsy disguise. We miss those little personal traits which reflect the distinctive lights of a marked individuality; and although the biographer turned historian may possibly have overlooked these, the presumption is that they had scarcely an existence. On the other hand, the life of some very obscure individual may supply admirable matter for the reality of romance. Thus, in singling out those self-reliant individuals who have raised themselves to distinction by self-help, Dr Smiles has hit on a most happy vein. Who can fail to follow with the closest interest the achievements of those adventurous engineering knight-errants, who vanquished by the vigorous

efforts of their brains the material obstacles which had been baffling our progress? Nor is it merely in the story of their most celebrated feats that the Stephensons or Arkwrights or Brunels impress us. Their whole experiences from their parish school-days, were a battle that ended in the triumph of faith. In the face of discouragements and difficulties, they are carried along by the natural bent that is absolutely irresistible; and often, fortunately for society, beyond either reason or control. Edward, the Banffshire naturalist—Dick, the Caithness-shire geologist, could hardly have imagined in their wildest dreams that Mr Mudie would have been circulating their memoirs by thousands. Yet for once the readers of the fashionable world have been just as well as generous in appreciation; for the lives of the humble shoemaker and baker are pregnant with lessons and their practical illustrations.

We assume that the biographer has some power of the pen, though the rule that we take for granted has many exceptions. But undoubtedly the first of his qualifications should be tact, for without that all the rest must be comparatively worthless. He should show his tact, in the first place, in deciding whether the life be worth writing or not. He must next exhibit it in the method of his scheme, and in his notions of literary perspective and proportion. Many a life that has proved intolerably dull, might well have repaid perusal had it taken the shape of slightly-linked fragments; each fragment embracing some episode of the career. First impressions in making acquaintance with a man go for a great deal. Many a life has been hastily thrown aside because we were bored by the hero in his

school and college days. It may be true that the child is the father of the man; yet we do not care to be personally introduced to the parent of each new acquaintance who promises to interest us. When the man has developed into an illustrious character, the child has often been an insufferable prig, who must have made itself a nuisance to the friends of the family. We may pity those unfortunates who could scarcely help themselves; but it is hard upon us half a century later to have more than some faint indication of the little student's precocious tastes. Macaulay sneers at Warren Hastings' habit of appearing morning after morning at the breakfast-table at Daylesford with the sonnet that was served with the eggs and rolls. But on the whole, we should rather have put up with the sonnets of the ex-Governor-General of Hindostan than with the sermons, essays, and political disquisitions in which the juvenile Macaulay showed such appalling fertility in the heavy dissenting atmosphere of his Clapham forcing-house. We admit that the interesting life by his nephew would have been altogether incomplete without a reference to these; and we merely take the book as an illustration of disproportion because it is in many respects admirable, and was universally read. Yet, though Mr Trevelyan, in the opinion of some people, may not have been unduly prolix, for ourselves we might possibly have stopped short on the threshold of his volumes, had we not been assured of the interest that must await us farther on.

Then tact is essential in collecting as well as in selecting. If the importance of your undertaking be sufficient to justify it, possibly the most comfortable way of collecting is by public advertisement. You

intimate a desire that any correspondents of the deceased may forward communications or letters—to be returned—to the care of the publishers. In the case of those who respond, you are only laid under a general obligation, and need make as little use as you please of the communication intrusted to your care. The objection to this plan appears to be, that it can but partially answer the purpose. Busy men may neither see nor heed the advertisement. And then there is the numerous class of *dilettante littérateurs*, who will only do a favour of the kind on urgent personal entreaty; and possibly, like the modest Mr Jonathan Oldbuck, in the expectation that it will be publicly acknowledged in some shape. When your store is amassed, as we have remarked already, your literary discretion is merely beginning to be tried. You have to face the invidious task of rejection, unless you mean consciously to mar your work and do injustice to the reputation you are responsible for. You find that your correspondent, the fussy *dilettante*, has been cackling over illusory treasures. You can make nothing of the packet of brief dinner invitations; or the note paying a civil compliment to the poem in manuscript that was promptly sent back. You give offence in other quarters with better reason. You cannot reproduce indefinitely very similar ideas; and there are passages and personalities in really suggestive letters which you are bound in common prudence to suppress. All that, however, is matter of personal feeling and sacrifice. You must make up your mind to make a certain number of enemies, and to brazen out a good deal of obloquy and abuse. After all, your rejected correspondents cannot cherish their malice for ever; nor are you likely to trouble them soon

again for another *magnum opus*. But when your materials have been sifted, and when what is worthless has been refused, you enter on the more delicate and critical stage of dealing with them as between yourself and your public. You must keep the fear of being wearisome perpetually before your eyes, and resign yourself to retrenching mercilessly on what at first sight seemed worthy of preservation. No matter how full of interest a life may have been, the public will not tolerate more than a reasonable amount of it; and it should be your study to bring out in striking relief those features which gave your subject his special claims to notoriety. It may have been lucky perhaps for Boswell, though of course he deplored it, that he should have made the acquaintance of his hero so late in life. Otherwise, though it is difficult indeed to believe, those delightful volumes of his might have been multiplied disagreeably.

Judicious glimpses at the domestic interior are indispensable; but unless, perhaps, in the case of a woman who has been throwing lustre on her times, without having recognised any “special mission” that way, it seems to us that those glimpses should be indulged in with extreme discretion. Much of course depends upon the man. We should never have loved either Scott or Southey half so much, had we not seen them sitting among their books or breaking loose upon their afternoon rambles, surrounded by the children they encouraged to be their playmates. The children who had the run of the inner book-room at Abbotsford, and kept possession of the little tenement at Keswick, became a part of the professional life of their parents. But that kind of domestic revelation may be very easily overdone; as when a

widow or daughter writes the life of the husband or father whose loss has left a grievous chasm in her existence. Then we have her—and very naturally, should she once have decided to make the public her confidants—always twining herself round the memory of the lost one, and recalling the thousand unsuggestive trifles which have a living and touching interest for herself; while an enthusiastic friend, though with less excuse, is apt to fall into a similar error.

That leads one naturally to the cardinal virtue of self-suppression, which, after all, is only another form of tact. If you are bent on killing two birds with one stone—if you hope to immortalise yourself in commemorating your friend—there is no more to be said save that doubtless you will go far towards defeating your own purpose; for a book can hardly fail to be poor when half the contents are either indifferent to the reader or objectionable. But a man's unconscious vanity may innocently enough cast a heavy shadow over his hero; or the writer may honestly multiply useful details, which as matter of self-regard he had better have restricted. If he be a Boswell or choose to play the Boswell, there is no great harm in that; but Boswells, as we have observed, are almost as rare as phoenixes. More often we have something in the style of Foster's 'Life of Dickens,' though the author will almost necessarily have been less fortunate in a subject. Mr Foster, in writing a most entertaining narrative, said nothing, of course, that was not strictly true, nor perhaps did he exaggerate either his intimacy or the influence he exercised on his friend. But though the delicate flatteries he published, and the details he gave, may have added life and colour to the story he was writing, they threw Dickens

himself into the background; and at all events, so far as its author was concerned, the impression of the book was decidedly displeasing.

There is one kind of memoir in which the writer must come to the front, and that is autobiography. If undertaken in a spirit of absolute candour and simplicity, nothing may be made more instructive and entertaining. Nor does it follow by any means that the autobiographer need be one of those men whose name has been much in the mouth of the world. On the contrary, in our opinion, the best of our autobiographies are those that have chiefly a domestic or personal interest. They should be the honest confessions of a nature that has the power of self-analysis; and nobody but the individual himself can make the disclosures which give such a history completeness. No incident can then be too insignificant, provided it have some distinct bearing on the end in view. The author must necessarily have a retentive memory, and he should have a natural instinct of self-observation. For in telling his plain unvarnished tale, he reveals himself more or less consciously; and if he have the knack of picturesque narrative, it is so much the better; while literary experience may be a positive snare. It may tempt him into the laying himself out for effect, which will almost inevitably defeat its purpose—into giving an air of artifice and sentiment to the confessions that should be unmistakably genuine. Some of the most satisfactory autobiographies we are acquainted with, have been written by women. Women, and especially French women, are more emotional and impressionable than the rougher sex. When they are warmed to their work, they have less hesitation in unbosoming themselves unreservedly in the public

confessional: nor are they embarrassed by false shame or overstrained sensitiveness, when they are impelled to lay bare their innermost feelings. But if a public man becomes his own historiographer, it is an incessant effort to be either straightforward or dispassionate. He places himself involuntarily on his defence, and is vindicating his reputation with his contemporaries and posterity. Naturally he cannot be over scrupulous in putting his conduct in the most favourable light: he launches cross indictments against the opponents who have impeached it; and even if in his own judgment he be punctiliously conscientious, his conscience may have been warped by the habit of self-deception.

What comes very near to actual autobiography, and may be even more strikingly indicative of character, is the publication of copious correspondence, either by itself or slightly connected by a commentary. The Duke of Wellington was a man of few words, and the Wellington despatches are models of terse narrative and pointed English. The writer, though he only alludes to himself incidentally, necessarily fills a great space in them, since he was making the war history he describes so lucidly. Yet with hardly a single directly personal touch, how forcibly and graphically we have the hero presented to us! Or take a genius of a very different order, who wrote with a different purpose, and in very different style. We have lately had a voluminous collection of the letters of Honoré de Balzac. The most important of these were addressed to two ladies—to the sister whom he had always made his *confidante*, and to the Russian baroness whom he afterwards married. We do not know if he had any idea that they might ultimately be published. Nor if he had, do we ima-

gine that it would have made any great difference; for a Frenchman whose soul is steeped in romance is likely to be transcendently feminine in his emotional candour. At all events, that lifelong series of letters makes up the most vividly descriptive of autobiographies. We know the novel-writer, with his bursts of sustained industry, when the fancy was working at high-pressure pace; with his trials, his triumphs, his eccentricities, and his extravagances, as if we had lived in his intimacy all his days. It is not only that we hear the duns knocking at his door, and see them assembled to lay siege to his ante-room, while he was feverishly toiling against time, filliping himself by perpetual doses of coffee in the sumptuous apartments they had furnished on credit. But he reveals all the caprices of his changing moods; he shows himself in his alternations of excitement and depression; he has no conception of drawing a veil over the failings and sensibility he is inclined to take pride in; he returns time after time to his literary feuds and resentments, as he is inexhaustible in his abuse of the pettifogging lawyers who strewed thorns among the rose-leaves on which he would have loved to repose. He cannot be said to exhibit himself to advantage, and yet somehow we like him. Not certainly on account of his genius, for that was decidedly of the cynical cast that repels affection though it compels admiration. We believe we take to him chiefly because he is so entirely without reserve for us. In ordinary biographies you feel that much may be kept back, and suspicion suggests or exaggerates the concealments; while, if a man be entirely outspoken, and seems to take your sympathy with him as a matter of course, we give him more than due credit for his amiable qualities. Unhappily, it is

seldom we have such elaborate self-portraiture nowadays, seeing that painstaking letter-writing is become a fashion of the past, and it is only one of the indefatigable French romance-writers like Balzac, Sand, or Dumas, who can spare time and thought for it from their multifarious avocations.

We are disposed to wonder at the courage or rashness of those who write the biographies of living men. The work can be but an unsatisfactory instalment at the best ; and it is impossible to overrate its delicacy or difficulty. It must tend to be either a libel or unmitigated eulogy, though much more often it is the latter. When an enemy undertakes it—and we have seen an instance of that lately in memoirs of the Premier—he must judge his subject solely by public appearances. He can have no access to those materials for the *vie intime* which can alone give truthful colour to the portrait. Besides, he holds a brief for the prosecution ; he has to vindicate the prejudices which warp his judgment, and he lays himself out to invent misconstruction of motives, if not for actual misrepresentations. While the partial friend or enthusiastic devotee can scarcely steer clear of indiscriminate puffing. Whatever he may do for the reputation of his subject, he can hardly fail to injure his own. As his readers are disposed to set him down as either a dupe or a shameless panegyrist, he pays the penalty of having thrust himself into a false position. If he has really much that is new and original to tell, it will be assumed that he has had direct encouragement to undertake the task. Few men are cast in such a mould, or occupy a position so unmistakably independent, that they can dare in such embarrassing circumstances to show the serene impartiality of the judge. If they

have gone for their information to the fountainhead, they have, in fact, committed themselves to a tacit arrangement by which they undertake to be nothing but laudatory. Should they insinuate blame, it is in such softened terms that they almost turn condemnation into compliments. And even when the writer can honestly be lavish of his praise, he must feel that his praises sound unbecoming. In short, as it seems to us, it is work that can scarcely be undertaken by any man of sensitive feeling.

Yet in more ways than one the production of a good biography is a most praiseworthy ambition, for no one is a greater benefactor alike to literature and posterity than the man who has achieved it. In spite of his amiable superstition and his tedious digressions, Plutarch is still a standard classic. Nor is there anything on which the popularity of ancient and modern historians like Tacitus or Clarendon, is more solidly established than their striking contemporary portraits. The sketch of Catiline is perhaps the most impressive part of Sallust's history of the famous conspiracy. What would we give now for the most meagre memoir of Shakespeare, were it only authoritative ? and had he found his Boswell or Lockhart, we might have had a book that would have gone down to posterity with his poems. So much is that the case, that one of the most favourite modern forms of biography consists in ransacking the authorities of the remote past, and piecing together such disjointed materials as they can supply. That must be more or less like reconstructing the mastodon from the traces he has left on the primeval rocks. Learned Germans, distinguished members of the French Academy, deeply-read professors in the English universi-

ties, have betaken themselves to rewriting the lives of illustrious Greeks and Romans. They have done most creditable work, we confess; and yet, however acutely logical the treatment may be, we have the impression that we are being beguiled into historical romance where the actual has been ingeniously merged in the ideal. In lives that came nearer to our own times, that impression naturally diminishes; and we grant that there is more satisfactory reason for writing them. The discoveries of gossipy State-papers all the world over—notably those in the archives of Simancas, and the official correspondence of accomplished Venetian emissaries—have thrown floods of unexpected light on some of the most remarkable personages of the middle ages. There is an odd fashion too in those subjects, and certain picturesque people and periods seem to have an irresistible fascination for literary men. Paradoxical conclusions, that are due in a great degree to the author's ingenuity, have of course their charm; and we can understand the taste that finds delight in whitewashing the most doubtful or disreputable figures in history. But the fact of some impressive character having already been repeatedly appropriated, appears to be a challenge to other artists to take him in hand; and thus, for example, we see a religious reformer like Savonarola, or such a subtle thinker as his contemporary Machiavelli, receiving, noteworthy as they undoubtedly were, more than their fair share of attention.

Next to Boswell's Johnson, to our mind the most enjoyable life in the language, is Lockhart's Scott. And a model biography it is for the practical purpose of example, since no one who can avail himself of somewhat similar advantages need despair of producing a creditable

imitation. As we have remarked already, the secret of Boswell's success in some degree defies and eludes detection; while some of the conditions to which it is most obviously due are such as few men would care to accept. They would object to discarding delicacy and reserve, and to pursuing their purpose with a sublime indifference as to whether or not they made themselves the laughing-stock of their readers. But Lockhart produced his fascinating work simply by writing a straightforward narrative. He was entirely outspoken as to the private life of his illustrious subject, except in so far as disclosures of family secrets were necessarily limited by good taste and good feeling. As we are taught to admire Sir Walter's genius in the critical appreciation of his works, we learn to love the man in his domestic intercourse. What can be pleasanter, for instance, than the picture of the lion taking refuge from the houseful of guests his hospitality had gathered into Abbotsford, at his favourite daughter's quiet breakfast-table under the trees in the little garden at Huntly Burn. We learn to love him in his friendship for his pets, for it was friendship at least as much as fondness; and they and their master thoroughly understood each other. Lockhart, with the true feeling of an artist, has painted Scott among his dogs as Raeburn did. We know them all, from Camp, whose death made him excuse himself from a dinner-party on account of the loss of a much-loved friend—from Maida sitting solemnly at his elbow in his study, or stalking gravely by his master's side, while the rest of the pack were gambolling ahead of them—down to "the shamefaced little terrier," who would hide himself at a word of reproof, and who could only be lured out of his se-

clusion by the irresistible sound of the meat-chopper at the dinner-hour. To be sure no biographer could have been more fortunate in a subject. The life of Scott from first to last was overcharged with diversified elements of romance. His lines were cast in the land of the Border, where every hamlet and peel-tower had its legend, and each stream and dale their ballads. There was an extraordinary blending of the picturesque with the practical as the lawyer turned into the poet and novelist; and the pen of the wizard in an evil hour took to backing the bills that landed him in insolvency. Seldom has there been a more strangely checkered career, or a losing campaign more gallantly fought out after the flush of an unexampled series of triumphs. Almost unprecedented prosperity had ended in what might have been the blackest eclipse, but for the manly nature that shone brightest at the last through the clouds that would have depressed any ordinary fortitude. Never was there stronger temptation to indiscriminate hero-worship, for Lockhart was the friend and confidant of his father-in-law, and had watched him with ever-growing admiration through his changing fortunes. No man was better fitted to appreciate that rare versatility of literary genius than one who had himself been a successful romance-writer, and who was a critic by temperament as well as habit. Perhaps it was partly owing to that critical temperament, with the practice of self-control which it inferred, that the biographer proved equal to his splendid opportunities. Partly because, setting the obligations of honesty aside, he felt that all he could tell of his father-in-law would only redound to Scott's honour in the end. But the result has been that we have a *Life* in many volumes which for

once we would very willingly have longer, and for once in a way, if there be a fault in the book, it is the excessive self-effacement of the accomplished author. Had he told all, which of course he could not do, we believe it would appear that his counsels to Scott had been invaluable.

Since Scott wrote the '*Napoleon*,' which hardly did justice either to the emperor or to the author, good lives of soldiers have been scarce—although by the way, in that connection, we may refer to the Count de Sèjur's admirable memoir of his master which came out a few years ago. Wellington and the heroes of the Peninsula had been disposed of; and there were few opportunities for soldiers distinguishing themselves in the comparatively peaceful times that followed. In India and the Crimea, though we do not forget dashing leaders like the Napiers, and many distinguished generals of division, no really great commander can be said to have come to the front; and the lives of officers in subordinate positions usually supply incidents that are too episodal. Besides, the memoir of a distinguished soldier must have mainly a strategical interest, and the most accomplished literary artist will find his talent taxed to the utmost if his book is to be made attractive to the general public. No doubt the authoritative life of Von Moltke will be a most valuable work, yet we may surmise that it will be heavy reading. Moreover, the present fashion of war correspondence unpleasantly anticipates the military memoir writer. He must go for his most exciting materials to republications that are universally accessible, though, after having been read, they may have been half forgotten in the newer interest of fresher sensations; while most men will be inclined to renounce in de-

spair the hope of improving on the picturesqueness of the best of these narratives.

It must be much the same in the case of statesmen. Formerly, when there were meagre Parliamentary reports,—when the Premier was a despot like Walpole or Chatham, and the administration arbitrary so long as he held office,—there was much that was interesting to be told, much that was mysterious to be explained, when a biographer found himself in a position to make confidences. Now it is comparatively rarely that we have to wait for the demise of the principal actors in them to learn the exact truth as to important transactions. Each successive step is submitted to the most searching scrutiny. Energetic or fussy members ask questions and raise debates. Ministers are forced to stand on their defence against attacks and insidious suggestions that cannot well be left unanswered. The debates are thrashed out in exhaustive leaders, while correspondents and consuls abroad are contributing to the literature of foreign questions. There is a serial publication of blue-books which are systematically condensed for the information of the public. No Minister dare refuse the publication of a State-paper: at the most, he can only take the responsibility of deferring it. Now and then a man's lips may be sealed by a punctilious sense of honour, or by circumstances which he can hardly command, as to some Cabinet decision or piece of diplomacy in which he played a conspicuous part. But with the lapse of time, people have ceased to feel concerned in that; and even when attention has been subsequently called to it in some keen political critique, it only awakens a languid interest. We are far from saying that the average talent of our

statesmen has declined, though the glare of publicity that exposes their shortcomings seems to give greater point every day to the famous dictum of Oxenstiern. But there can be no question that writing their lives in detail is coming more and more to have much in common with the philosophical revision of ancient history.

Even with the lawyers, things have changed for the worse. There used to be fine scope for forcible writing in a brilliant forensic career, when beginning with some unlooked-for exhibition of eloquence; with the lucky hit of a junior stepping into the place of an absent leader, it led him through professional and political intrigues and many a hotly contested election, to land him in the Chief Justiceship or on the woolsack. At present the course of the profession is more prosaic. The young barrister's best chance at his start is a paying family connection, or marriage with a lady who brings clients as her dowry. He climbs the ladder by slow degrees, and it is seldom he clears the first rounds at a spring. The ballot and the new election laws have done away with the romance of the hustings; and even the humours of the circuits seem to have been dying out with the old habits of sociable conviviality. We fear we shall never again have such a book as Twiss's 'Life of Lord Eldon;' nor need future Lord Chancellors fear a new series of a Lord Campbell's 'Lives,' which shall "add a fresh horror to death."

Perhaps in the general decadence of the art, the lives of divines are the sole exception; and that is chiefly because they are so seldom liberally catholic either in their spirit or their interest. A man who has made a name as a pulpit-orator, or who has played a leading part in the affairs of some Church

or sect, has his personal following of devoted worshippers. In nine cases out of ten the life has been written by some faithful follower who has clung to him like Elisha to Elijah. The biography becomes the faithful reflection of its subject's views and convictions. We can hardly say that his prejudices are treated with tenderness; for they are adopted, defended, and developed. The people who make a rush on the first edition know exactly what they have to expect, and there is little chance of their being disgusted or disappointed, since the name and familiar opinions of the author guarantee the tone. The bitterness of conflicting creeds is proverbial; and it is too seldom that a writer seizes on the grand opportunity of soaring superior to the narrow prepossessions of sectarianism, into the untroubled atmosphere of the Christian religion. Yet though a sectarian memoir must be one-sided and narrow-minded, it need by no means of necessity be a literary blunder. On the contrary, earnest partisanship may be an antidote to dullness; bitterness of feeling gives it a certain piquancy; and the invective that is inspired by honest self-satisfaction may lend animation and vigour to the style. The pious men who are most likely to be treated catholically, and to be made beacons for the devout of future generations, are those whose influence has extended beyond their communions, and whose intellect has been expanded by circumstances or in the turmoil of religious convictions. As in the case of Chalmers, for example, when he won the respect of the world for the breadth of his labours and the liberality of his opinions, until he broke down in the melancholy struggle which led to the disruption of Christian unity and kindly feeling in the Scotch

Church; or of Dr Newman, when, in the height of his reputation as logician and controversialist, he passed over from Oxford to Rome; or, above all, of the self-denying pioneers of missionary enterprise like Xavier or Martyn, Livingstone or Wilson.

We may dismiss the subject of contemporary biography with the briefest notice of some of the works that happen to have appeared very recently, though any attempt at a comprehensive survey is far beyond the compass of our article. And we may go back to the published volumes of the Prince Consort's life, as the work is still uncompleted. By the consent of the critics, Mr Theodore Martin has fully justified the confidence which intrusted to him a task in which her Majesty is so nearly and dearly interested. The Prince's peculiarly difficult position had made him enemies; and excited jealousies which generated prejudices and misrepresentations. The "fierce light that beats upon a throne" is a very deceptive figure of speech; for the fitful flashes that come quicker in times of political excitement are apt to give false ideas of facts; while the shining qualities of the occupant are lost in the dazzle, and unobtrusive family virtues may escape notice altogether. In doing justice to the memory of her husband, by publishing his memoirs with almost absolute unreserve, her Majesty exercised a wise discretion. In unbosoming herself as to the loss she had sustained, she made the nation doubly sympathetic in her sorrow; and in these times, when thrones are shaking abroad, and experience is demonstrating the instability of republican institutions, it is almost impossible to overrate the value of such a book. The Life is full of those high lessons which it should

be the chief purpose of biography to convey. There are no symptoms in it of fulsome praise, and yet we may add that there is nothing which does not redound to the honour of its subject. The family details that are given so frankly and naturally, have of course a very exceptional interest. And it presents a remarkable example of versatile energy and keen political insight united to most extraordinary self-restraint. For once the political chapters of a biography have a double interest. For, emanating from the most unexceptionable information, they clear up much that had been hitherto obscure in the most momentous events of recent history; while they show all her Majesty owed to her husband, and with what indefatigable intelligence he had laboured in the interests of the adopted country, that too often repaid him with perverse misrepresentation.

Among the latest publications on our table, we find a miscellany of subjects and styles—the *Life of Bismarck*, by Busch; of *Machiavelli*, by Villari; of *Madame de Bunsen*, by Mr Augustus Hare; of *George Moore*, by Smiles; of *Dr Hook*, by his son-in-law; of *Sydney Dobell*. We may say that we have already passed them indirectly in review. Herr Busch illustrates all the indiscretions of the life of a very great man, written by an obsequious dependant. There are many amusing personal touches, no doubt; but as biography, it is valueless, because it is entirely in rose-colour. The writer's ideas are the reflection of those of his idol, as lizards take their tints from the rocks they crawl on. Besides, the Prince's biography runs into history, and the history is too evidently "inspired." Machiavelli, so far as the subject has yet been carried, is handled with highly creditable im-

partiality; but the book is in great measure a historical essay, where facts are supplemented by ingenious theories, which, though plausible, are seldom solidly established. *Madame de Bunsen's Memoirs* are excellent in their way, and we fancy it will prove to be one of the books that you may care to dip into again and again. A charming and highly accomplished woman, who lived in the highest society in Europe, and whose places of residence made her as familiar with the associations of the past as with the intellectual activity of this age of progress, gives the exhaustive diary of an eventful life in a series of delightful letters. But here, too, we are bound to add, that the book would have been the better for judicious retrenchment; and in particular, our remarks as to hesitating on the threshold, will apply to the minute analysis of the lady's pedigree. The same apparently inevitable criticism will apply to *George Moore* and *Sydney Dobell*, though both are well worth reading, and the former especially. We hardly know how we came to overlook it in our observations on *Dr Smiles*. For it shows the author at his best in his nervous though somewhat homely style; and in his intuitive perception of the striking traits that may best serve to illustrate the man he is describing. Not that *George Moore* is made by any means ideally attractive. There can hardly be a greater contrast between the active career of the pushing commercial traveller and tradesman, who, turning into the generous and religious philanthropist, made friends as fast as he made a fortune, and whose power of activity seemed to be multiplied with the number of objects he took in hand; and the life of the dreamy poet and thinker, whose best efforts were baffled by misfortunes, and by the maladies to which

he prematurely succumbed. Yet though comparison must be unfair when the objects of it are so opposed, we do not know that Dobell's memoir is not the more instructive of the two. For it is harder to keep up heart and faith against ever renewed disappointment and bodily anguish; harder to keep the freshness of your kindly sympathies unimpaired, than to carry the full cup with a steady hand when prosperity and the world are conspiring to spoil you.

Johnson on one occasion remarked that no writers were more defective than writers of travels. As we have the highest respect for his critical judgment, we conclude that things have greatly changed since his time. If there has been a decline in biography lately, and if its prospects can hardly be said to be encouraging, works of travels are becoming more valuable. No doubt they are not always so exciting as they once were, and there is less of the sensational in them than there used to be, when the daring adventurer could throw the reins to his imagination, and revel in the wonders he professed to relate, being well assured that nobody could contradict him. These were happy days when the narrator had no fear of the critics; when there were no learned geographical societies to sift his statements and dispute his conclusions; and when the public were willing to swallow everything, from magnetic mountains and ape-headed anthropophagi down to phoenixes and fiery flying-serpents. It is hard to measure the splendid possibilities of the boundless fields of untravelled mystery, when grave men made pilgrimages to empires and potentates that had never existed save in the realms of fable. Even when the world had grown more enlightened, travellers still had magnificent opportunities. Go

where they would beyond the frontiers of civilisation, and out of the frequented tracts of commerce, they could never fall on what was flat and unprofitable. Fresh discoveries rewarded each feat of enterprise; for each step they made in advance lay through unknown or forgotten countries. If the risks they ran were great, the rewards were proportionate. No one but the hardiest of enthusiasts would dream of hazarding himself in such work; and we can fancy the thrill of delight that made him forget his sufferings, when he saw the giant columns of Baalbec or Palmyra crimsoned by the gorgeous desert sunset; when he stumbled into such a secluded valley as Petra, where the rock-hewn tombs and temples rose, tier over tier, in the pristine freshness of the rose-tinted granite; or when he identified the site of some seat of world-renowned empire, marked by its shapeless masses of crumbled mud-brick and its mounds of shivered and sun-bleached pottery. And there were incidents enough in all conscience to enliven the narrative. When these travellers observed the manners and customs of sullen fanatics and savage tribes, they had everywhere to run the gauntlet of aggressive suspicion. As our village boys or roughs of the cities would mob a Chinaman in calico and pigtail, they were hooted and hounded through the villages where they sought a supper and a couch. Explorers in Africa nowadays have their troubles and dangers, as we know. But they generally go attended by the formidable escort that enables them to fight a battle on occasion; and they carry ample means of buying provisions, or bartering for them, though the natives must sometimes be forced to deal. Those famous Scotch pioneers, Bruce and Mungo Park, were beggars to all

intents and purposes. They had to pray for the daily dole that was to keep body and soul together; they humbly acknowledged such hospitality as was offered them; and were grateful for the cup of cold water that was bestowed by feminine charity. Necessarily their surveying work was roughly done; they had to make their hurried observations by stealth, and put their questions at the peril of their lives. In that respect they much resembled those daring Indian pundits, who have been sent by Montgomery and other of our frontier officials on scientific tours through Thibet and the Himalaya. Making any regular notes was generally out of the question; and when we consider the manner of men they were, and the circumstances under which they had to rely on the memory, we may give them no little credit for their literary workmanship.

Now all that is changed. There are barbarous districts, and even independent semi-civilised states, of which our knowledge is still of the vaguest; and till the other day there were thick clouds of uncertainty hanging over the sources of such rivers as the Nile and the Congo. But on the whole the progress that has been made is marvellous; nor are there many corners of the habitable globe into which civilisation has not pushed its researches. Thus, Russia and England, respectively advancing from the shores of the Caspian and the mouths of the Ganges, have met among the robber races of Central Asia. The American farmers and miners, pushing across through the wilderness on their march to the California coast, have reclaimed the magnificent hunting-grounds of the West, nearly extirpating the Red Indian in the process. Railway companies are projecting Grand

Trunk lines through the pampas and forests of Southern America; and we have either formed colonies or established consuls in Australasia and the island groups of the South Seas; while Central Africa is no longer marked "unexplored" in the atlases, and believed to be an inhospitable waste of sand, like the Kali-hari desert or the Great Sahara.

There can be few grand sensations in store for us, since the comprehensive course of a general survey has dashed off the great contours of the globe, and all that is left for us now is to map out the world in detail. But after all, the blanks in the details are innumerable; they excite an increasing and more intelligent interest, and there are abundance of capable men who are eagerly volunteering to gratify that. There are men of wealth and culture and leisure to whom travel is an indispensable distraction. There are merchants whose enterprise carries them along little-trodden trade routes into remote and hitherto inaccessible localities; there are consular and mercantile agents who interest themselves professionally in the people among whom their lot has been cast. They kill the leisure that would otherwise hang heavy on their hands by a course of intelligent study and observation: and they strive to occupy their holidays profitably in expeditions that may do them credit by extending discoveries. The "grand tour" round Europe is long ago gone out of date. One can easily knock it off by instalments in the Easter recess, or in some part of the summer season that comes in between the intervals of shooting. Men think nothing of putting a girdle round the world, though they may not quite accomplish it in forty days, like the hero of the piece at the Porte St Martin; and

even ladies like Mrs Brassey, in well-appointed yachts, perform feats of circumnavigation that, in point of time and distance, throw the life-labours of Cook and Wallis into the shade.

While, of course, more serious enterprise with definite objects is being developed in proportion. Those inquisitive geographical bodies, though they may put a curb on the exuberance of the explorer's fancy, serve a very useful purpose after all. International emulation is stimulated, and scientific exploration is systematically organised and generously rewarded with fame and medals. Intelligent curiosity, even more than philanthropy, has been opening up new destinies for Africa, while it promises to rescue the miserable African tribes from the consequences of their own blood-feuds and avarice. Though we must not, in referring to African discovery, overlook the invaluable services of the missionaries, with men like Moffat and Livingstone at their head. Nor have Germany and France been behindhand in the work ; although the favourite fields of operations of their emissaries have rather lain in the north and north-west. But it is bare justice to say that it is to a brilliant group of English travellers that Africa and geography are most largely indebted. It would be difficult to exaggerate the qualities of the men who have repeatedly penetrated to the heart of the dark continent, or forced their way through its dangers in various directions. They were greatly helped, no doubt, by the funds and appliances which awakened interest placed at their disposal. But each one of them might have rivalled the most scantily equipped of their predecessors in fertility of resource as in resolute endurance. In some respects, indeed, the modern African traveller has more formidable difficulties to

contend with, though they are difficulties of a different kind. Bruce or Park, Denham or Clapperton, had to carry his life in his hand, having made up his mind that he might probably lose it. Having deliberately counted the cost before, they had only themselves to be answerable for ; and, next to their courage and presence of mind, they had to trust in great measure to the chapter of accidents. Submission in one shape or another was their sole resource, and they had to do their best to slip through the fingers of the savages. But the modern adventurer should be a general and a diplomat. He conducts an expedition of enterprise that resembles on a small scale the dashing invasion of a Cortes or Pizarro ; the difference being that, in place of being at the head of an iron soldiery who will follow his lead in the last extremity, he has to make his way with troops and a bodyguard who are but semi-barbarous volunteers. He has to keep them from flight or mutiny, in the face of threats, terrors, and intrigues ; and must buy and negotiate the right of passage through the territories of the grasping petty despots, with whom he may not improbably come to blows.

Hence the story of his perils and adventures must have a many-sided interest, and its incidents may often really resolve themselves into the higher order of biography. We see a rare combination of extraordinary qualities in habitual exercise : we follow the workings of a quick and far-reaching intellect, suggesting to itself those solutions of standing geographical problems which are to guide the future course of the expedition : giving careful thought to political considerations : coming to prompt decisions in critical emergencies : and showing itself, through months of incessant strain, ready to

respond to an urgent call at any moment. Though health may relax in an enervating climate, or be broken by prolonged anxiety and want, the spirit is still resolute and vigorous; and, whatever may be his reasonable apprehensions of the future, the leader must still show a smiling face to his disheartened party. While all the time he is writing up the diary, which not only notes each incident of the march and camp, but is exhaustive in the special information he came in search of. The memory cannot be relied upon for the work of months and years, and his object is precision, so far as it is attainable. The chapters that form a condensed encyclopedia in geography and hydrography, soil, climate, politics, and ethnological characteristics, are illustrated by sketches and skeleton-maps. These invaluable literary treasures run even more risks than their owner. They may sink in the swamping of a canoe, when he may swim and save himself; or they may be burned in a fire in the camp, for he cannot carry them about on his person; or they may be captured in a sudden attack, or abandoned by a runaway porter in the jungle. Should they survive to be delivered to an English publisher, they generally well repay the trouble that has been bestowed on them, though our careless ingratitude seldom appreciates that. Considering the qualities that have recommended the writer for his work, we expect to find them full of valuable information. Yet taking into account the circumstances under which they were originally compiled, and the drudgery that necessarily goes to recasting them, we should not be surprised to find them rather heavy reading. The life that was stirring enough to those who led it might easily be made very dull in the narration: one night-alarm, or am-

bush, or skirmish with savages, very much resembles another. Our sensibility is blunted, after a time, to the record of dreary periods of starvation, broken by an occasional feast; and scientific observations and speculations are apt, at the best, to be dry. As a matter of fact, and it strikes us as a somewhat extraordinary phenomenon, the literary workmanship of these volumes of African travel has almost invariably left little or nothing to desire. The thrilling vicissitudes of most dangerous adventures are recounted with equal modesty and spirit; a succession of episodes of thrilling romance are agreeably varied by their distinctive features; and if there must unavoidably be a considerable amount of repetition, the inevitable *ennui* of it is reduced to a minimum. Not unfrequently the excitement is "piled so high" that were not its truth confirmed by the results of the achievement, we should find it very hard to believe. Occasionally even the scientific chapters have the charm of fairy tales. Incidentally we have vivid descriptions of scenery, which give as clear an idea of the landscapes and their vegetation as the photographs or sketches by which they are illustrated. To beguile the tedium of the monotonous march, we have now and then some exciting narrative of sport: though, except in Baker's books on the Nile tributaries, the sport, for the most part, takes the character of "pot-hunting." While, if the proper study of mankind be man, the writers have industriously availed themselves of their ample opportunities in that department. In those long tedious marches, in the still more heartbreaking halts, they must be always studying the peculiar idiosyncrasies of their followers. The "wily savage" is always willing to shirk; lying is the virtue

that is held in highest esteem by him; and an air of dull or brutal stolidity may conceal the art of an accomplished actor. Many of those pictures of the native, by "one who knows him," are admirably suggestive or extremely humorous. At one time it used to be held as an axiom, that the man of action was seldom likely to be much of a proficient in literary composition. Latterly we have seen occasion to believe that the rule is precisely the reverse. It would appear that the capacity for sustained mental and physical activity implies corresponding literary power; that decision of character and fertility of resource translate themselves into versatile freshness of thought and vigorous treatment in spirited diction. We have listened to eminent travellers who have spent long years away from civilisation, who sometimes, for example, like Gifford Palgrave among the Arabs, have almost had the opportunity of forgetting their native tongue, and who have come home to address a critical assemblage at the Geographical Society in well-chosen language with perfect self-composure. What is more remarkable, perhaps, some of the men who stammer through the formal acknowledgment of their health at a public dinner, become eloquent in an entire absence of self-consciousness when they speak at length on the labours they have delighted in. And so it would appear, that when they sit down to write in their studies they still answer to the spur of the peculiar temperament that animated and sustained them in their hazardous adventures.

Had the books they have written been dull, they would scarcely have been read except by *savants*. As it is, the libraries order them by thousands; the first editions are exhausted before they are well issued,

and the ingenious writers of romance may envy the more popular actors of it. Who is not become familiar with African customs and scenery, from the Cataracts on the Nile to the Falls on the Zambesi, from the white-washed frontages of Zanzibar to the palms of S. Paul de Loanda? We are acquainted with the whole trying process of bargaining and recruiting; of collecting the bales of cloth, the coils of wire, and the packages of beads. We know only too well the Arab slave-traders, with caravans where the groans of the victims make chorus to the crack of the lash and clink of the manacles; where the camp-followers are the jackals and the flights of vultures, and where the tracks are marked by bleaching skeletons. We are made to enter into the feelings of Burton and Speke and Grant, where they came unexpectedly upon magnificent highland scenery on what had been supposed to be barren sands; or launched their craft upon inland seas calmly reposing under feathering woods when they are not lashed into turmoil by storms from the mountains. We learn to draw shrewd deductions from the slopes of the watersheds; and in anxious suspense as to possible disappointment, we identify the outflows of infant streams with those sources that have been the standing problem of men of science. Or we commit ourselves with Cameron and Stanley to the tranquil bosom of some "abounding river," that will tumble later down the sides of the tableland in cataracts and swirling whirlpools; and speculation slowly changes to conviction as we mark the affluence of mighty tributaries, since that growing volume of water can only carry us to our foregone conclusion. Without discussing the nicer questions of humanity or necessity, nothing can be more dramatic than the accounts of

the hotly contested advance, when the parties are dwindling with death and disease, as day after day they drew nearer to their goal, only to force their way through fresh arrays of combatants. But the tales of bloodshed, sickness, and suffering are varied with lighter and livelier episodes, which show that the most anxious life has its contrasts. As when they find hospitality and temporary repose with some gentler savage who welcomes the strangers, and only fleeces them moderately. When Baker finds himself on the banks of the Blue Nile, camping in a delicious climate, in the happy hunting-grounds that might have gladdened the soul of a Harris or Gordon Cumming. When sitting in his tent-door, like the patriarchs, of a summer evening, he sees the herds of stately elephants and camelopards cropping the drooping foliage in the forest glades. Where the rhinoceros stands scratching his horny hide against the stem of some venerable thorn; and the herds of antelopes are sporting under the mimosa groves or coming down in herds to drink at the water.

Since Vambéry wrote the wonderful account of his travels in disguise, there have been many excellent books on Central Asia; though, as we have already remarked, it is being opened up to Europeans by the steady advance of Russian annexation. But there are still highland states to the north of our Indian mountain boundary which offer all the temptation of being practically inaccessible; while even those of them that indirectly acknowledge our influence have inducements enough in dangers as in sport to invite the enterprise of travelling knight-errants. Though we have already noticed at some length in our pages Mr Andrew Wilson's 'Abode of Snow,' it is

well worth recalling, for we have rarely read anything more exciting. It was a novelty in mountaineering for a sick man to be carried in litters and local *chaises-à-porteurs* over the passes that are the drain-pipes of the "Roof of the World." To cross those fragile swinging bridges shockingly out of repair, might test the nerve of a Leotard; or to ride the unwieldy yak along the dizzy ledges that slope over crumbling slate downwards towards bottomless abysses. Shaw and Forsyth and Gordon have depicted the dangers of the storm-beaten trade routes that lead through snow-covered summits to the back-of-the-world dominions of the late Atalik Ghazi, whose death is likely to be lamented by commerce. And to come back under the guns of our English garrisons, into quieter and more settled districts, among the many works that are always appearing, we may call attention to 'Sport and Work on the Nepaul Frontier.' Although unpretending, it is singularly exhaustive and very pleasantly diversified. The writer tells us all about the indigo-planting in Behar, in which he was professionally employed for many years; and while instructing his readers, he interests them in a pursuit which demands extraordinary and unremitting attention. At the same time, he sagely takes it for granted that they are as ignorant as most people of Indian life; and merely communicating his information incidentally, he contrives to throw an infinity of light on it. While he shows, at the same time, what diversified enjoyment may be found by a healthy and active man who depends on exercise, and delights in sport, in a life that would otherwise be intensely depressing.

But it would be difficult indeed to name a country that has not been lately "done" more or less satisfac-

torily. Not excepting even the daring exploits of the first hardy Arctic explorers, in the wooden craft of a score or two of tons, that would have cracked like walnut shells to the squeeze of the ice-floes, we have no more thrilling narratives of hair-breadth escapes than those by Sir George Nares and Captain Markham. While the science of which our early navigators knew no more than sufficed to read the signs of the weather, plays an important part in these, as in the various "logs" of the *Challenger*, which Sir George Nares formerly commanded. And to go back from the frozen latitudes to the tropics, we have had 'Burmah' by General Fytche, who was long our Resident there. We have had books on Siam and Cochin China, by consuls and shrewd merchants, who have told us all about the once jealous courts of the White Elephant, and who have visited those wonderful temples in the jungles that have failed to commemorate long-forgotten dynasties. Naturalists, like Wallace in the Spice Islands and Malay Peninsula, or like Bates on the Amazon, have investigated the fauna of tropical forests, undeterred by malaria and those insect pests which indeed were among the agreeable pains of their wanderings. It must be some satisfaction to revenge one's self for a bite by transfixing the fly for the edification of entomologists. We have had more than one fascinating volume on the South Seas, and notably on the Hawaiian Archipelago, which seems the nearest approach to a sensual paradise, in spite of its volcanoes and its colonies of lepers. There has been nothing more thrilling than the narratives of the survivors of those forlorn hopes in the interior of Australia, who groped their way through the desolation of the waterless waste, turning back again and again to

some scanty spring, and barely sustaining life by the slaughter of the starving camels. All the states of South America, with their earthquakes and revolutions, have been repeatedly described in the minutest detail; and if Peruvian and Venezuelan bondholders, shareholders in Brazilian railways and mines; intending emigrants to the cattle-rearing pampas; and gentlemen who, like the Frenchman lately deceased, dream of cutting out a kingdom in Patagonia, do not have the requisite information at their finger-ends, it is no fault of the great corporation of travellers. Independently of any intrinsic interest, there are few of these books that are not more than readable; and in many of them the mere literary style would do credit to any man who had made a business of authorship. And one new and agreeable feature to be remarked in them is the profusion and excellence of the illustrations. Cities and their modern architecture, ruins and scenery, are reproduced from photographs or capitalsketches. While almost invariably the authors show their good sense by putting themselves in the hands of some very capable map-maker. And *apropos* to careful description and exact map-making, Conder's 'Tent-Life in Palestine' deserves a special notice. The scientific survey of the Holy Land was an undertaking worthy of the English nation, and Captain Conder's volumes will be read with the warmest interest by the many who sympathise in the new crusade. He has cleared up many a doubtful point; conclusively settled many a contested site; confirmed, or logically refuted, many an ingenious suggestion; while he has given us what will be indispensable as a work of reference to the critical student of biblical history.

We could run through a long catalogue of entertaining travels—

not forgetting Mr Aylward's book on the Transvaal, full of practical hints and valuable information for the soldiers who are campaigning in Zululand—which might equally overtax our memory and space. But we cannot dismiss the subject without some allusion to the travellers who are rather tourists. Among them we suppose we must include, though they may take it as an insult, the gentlemen who hurry round the globe in a single protracted holiday expedition. Baron Hübner, the Austrian minister, and author of the 'Life of Pope Sixtus V.,' the French Count Roger de Beauvoir, who made his voyages as companion of one of the Orleans princes, are among the most cultivated and intelligent representatives of the class. When we say that they made the tour of the world, we mean of course that they did it by leaps and bounds, yet they have missed few of the chief objects of interest. The rapidity of their panoramic survey is favourable to hitting off its salient features. They contrast the jealously exclusive civilisation of China with revolutionary societies like that of Japan and the go-ahead democracy of our American cousins. Steaming along the grand waterways of commerce, they break the journey at the chief commercial centres. Generally, with their rank or recognised position, they carry their own introductions along with them, and mix as men of another world with the people who are best fitted to enlighten them. The modern tourist of any pretensions has opportunities that were seldom within the reach of his precursors. Either he is socially a personage, or he has an engagement with some great organ of the press. In any case it is known that he goes about taking notes, and the probabilities are that he thinks of publishing. And as all communi-

ties wish to be well spoken of nowadays; as every State must contemplate borrowing, and is jealous of consideration in proportion to its shortcomings,—they are desirous of exhibiting themselves to the best advantage. So all doors fly open before the traveller; carriages and special trains are placed at his disposal; high officials insist on acting as cicerones; and debates in representative chambers are got up for his special edification. Possibly all that sweeping and garnishing may throw some dust in the sharpest eyes; but keen observers like Mr Trollope or Mr Brassey, for example, are not very easily blinded, and, on the whole, the world decidedly gains by the new system of dispassionate supervision and publicity.

From travels we may naturally pass to sport, since so many of our travellers are enthusiastic sportsmen. And sport generally includes natural history, for most of the gentlemen who penetrate into the wilds with waggons or a flying camp-train, come back with the trophies they know how to classify. Never are they happier than on the rare occasions when they have added a new variety to the species in our museums or zoological gardens. Sporting books are become more pleasant reading, thanks to the recent improvements in arms and ammunition. A certain amount of suffering there must be; and as pheasants fly away with pellets in their bodies, so the greater game must often go off with the deadly ball festering in their vitals or dragging a shattered limb behind. But we never hear now of the crack shot, galloping behind the shoulder of the camelopard, loading and firing again till the agony of the animal is ended; nor of elephants turning to bay and charging again, till they drop at last to the slow

bombardment. A rifle nearly as ponderous as a small field-piece sends the explosive bullet straight to the mark, and concussion with the shivered bone explodes the projectile on the instant. While as mere sportsmen have to go further afield, they are bound to become more and more of geographers. Officers and civilians, when lucky enough to obtain leave from departments morbidly apprehensive of international difficulties, explore the glaciers and snow-heaped valleys in the wildest recesses of the Himalaya and the Hindoo Koosh. The elephant hunter, who used to find magnificent shooting on the Limpopo, has to penetrate to the Zambesi, and even beyond it. While in the great West of America, the buffalo—or bison—has been wellnigh exterminated; and you must seek him to the south on the New Mexican frontier, or to the northward in his circumscribed range on the Yellowstone, or in scattered herds in the valley of the Saskatchewan. Owing to that indiscriminate slaughter, and to the rapid extinction of the Red men, who used to feed their squaws and papooses by the chase, we fear we have seen nearly the last of that library of prairie and Rocky Mountain adventure to which Catlin and Washington Irving and Ruxton contributed. Yet within the last few years we have had two books at least which are by no means unworthy of their more famous predecessors. Colonel Dodge's 'Hunting-Grounds of the Great West' and Major Campion's 'On the Frontier' may probably be among the latest of the standard authorities on American hunting as it used to be, and on the habits of "the skulking savage." Major Campion, by-the-by, published a second book the other day, which for decided originality deserves some notice under the head of travels. So far

as we know, he was the first foreigner who undertook a regular walking tour in Spain, everybody else having acted on the dogma of Ford, that the *caballero* must take his horse as a guarantee of respectability, even if he preferred to have the animal led behind him.

As hazards have diminished with improvements in firearms, shooting in the forest and jungle is less risky than formerly, and consequently sporting narratives are less exciting. Moreover, narrow "shaves" and "squeaks" and ventures at close quarters, merging on the foolhardy, have been so often described, that they have naturally been losing much of their zest. Time after time, in the fancy if not in the flesh, we have dodged the charge of the infuriated elephant, or caught the twinkling bloodshot eye of the wounded rhinoceros. We have learned by too manifold experience how hard it is to double through thorny scrub when your pursuer is crashing behind you by sheer weight; and when you are saved by Providence or some lucky accident as you are almost within reach of the tusks or the horn. Time after time we have crouched along the tangled jungle-path in quest of the lurking tiger, looking for the sinister gleam of his eyeballs in the noonday shadows; or have sat watching for a night-shot at the terrible man-eater, with the mangled corpse of his victim for a lure. There is novelty, and consequently more excitement, in the newfangled break-neck mountaineering, when we go scrambling along the precipices or scaling the heights, whence we can drop down on the "bighorn" of the Rocky Mountains, or his cousin the wild goat of Kashmir and Thibet. Nor need one travel to the other side of the world to indulge in that kind of sport; and in the way of European adventure, Mr

Baillie Grohman's book on the 'Tyrol and the Tyrolese' will be found almost as pleasant reading as Boner's more famous 'Chamois-hunting in Bavaria.' The story of the stiff mountain expeditions where he carried a rifle in place of an alpenstock, is told with great spirit and vivacity; and he does justice to the foresters or *freischütze* who shared his bivouacs in the alpine huts or the cover of the pine-woods, without losing sight of those inconsistencies in their character that are more picturesque than engaging. For in the hills that look down upon railways and hotels that are patronised by the troops of peaceful tourists, men still stalk and shoot each other without the smallest hesitation; while their contests of strength and pluck at convivial meetings in the village *wirthhäuser* are habitually marked by brutal ferocity.

Books of sport and natural history in the British Islands have never been so numerous as we might have expected. Perhaps because the few that are most popular are so excellent that they hold their own against competition, and reduce ordinary writers to despair. Half the world nowadays are keen shots, and a fair sprinkling of sportsmen may be said to be scientific observers. So everything is in the manner of telling the thrice-told story, and of describing those incidents that are familiar to everybody. You can hardly say where the happy knack lies. Yet you acknowledge it in the language which, though natural and unstudied, conveys the most pleasing and vivid impressions. Natural history has made considerable progress since White observed the feathered inhabitants of Selborne Hanger, and Waterton turned his gardens into a sanctuary; yet new editions of their works are per-

petually appearing, and each issue has as hearty a welcome as its predecessors. It would seem as if men like these, if once they are induced to take pen in hand, must communicate in their original freshness their own heartfelt impressions. We know that the author of 'The Wild Sports of the Highlands,' and the 'Notes of a Naturalist in Morayshire,' was only reluctantly persuaded to publish by the persuasions of his friend Mr Cosmo Innes; and how many of us have good reason to be grateful for the success of his trial article in the 'Quarterly.' As, not very long ago, we noticed at length the latest edition of 'The Moor and the Loch,' we need not do more than refer to it now as a fascinating encyclopedia of that wide range of Highland and Lowland sports which have been the lifelong delight of its veteran author. And in these days when the rents of forests and moors have been running to figures almost prohibitory to any but millionaires, it is something to "get a wrinkle" about inexpensive shooting. The gentleman who writes under the *noms de plume* of "Snapshot" and "Wild Fowler," has collected a variety of scattered articles into six volumes in three successive series, which supply an infinity of useful and practical information. They are pleasantly written, if occasionally monotonous. He tells how, by simply crossing the Channel, the sportsman, at a very moderate outlay, may find himself comparatively in clover. It appears that in Belgium, notwithstanding the predominance of the class of small peasant-proprietors, there is good varied shooting to be rented very cheaply by a man who knows how to set about it. The writer has found enjoyable quarters in the beautiful woodlands of Alsace and Lorraine; while if you can only

spare time for a short excursion, there are *communes* in the French departments of the north and west which will repay a flying visit. The bags of duck that may be made by ambush-shooting in Holland sound almost fabulous. But if you can make yourself happy among wild-fowl and divers, and do not object to some exposure and "roughing it," there is a great deal to be done in the free shooting-grounds that extend along our English shores, between the sea-line and the cultivated country. Near our tidal harbours, and the termini of the great coast railways, you may shoot away a heavy bag of cartridges in the course of a good day's walk. The tidal estuaries of the little rivers, and the swamps overflowed by the spring-tides, are all frequented in the season by great flights of birds. Stepping softly over shingle and sea-weed; carefully approaching the winding creeks and their tributaries; slipping alone under cover of the embankments and sea-walls,—you may shoot successively at herons and curlews, plover, duck, snipe, sandpiper, and swarms of oxbirds, greenshanks, and redshanks.

But by far the most accomplished rural enthusiast who has written of late years, is the anonymous author of 'The Gamekeeper at Home,' and 'Wild Life in a Southern County,' which appeared originally in the 'Pall Mall Gazette.' He is one of the men you cannot help liking, just as he loves the wild creatures of all kinds, among whom he has evidently lived from his childhood. Like our old friend the incumbent of Selborne, nothing has escaped his notice. He has the

eye of an artist for the beauties of nature, for the shifting sky-effects of our variable climate, and the venerable churches, manor-houses, and farms. He has been a familiar and welcome guest in the homesteads and cottages, where his quick observation catches each detail, from the bulging lines of the gables and the walls without, to the old gun hanging over the mantel-shelf within doors, or the fitches suspended in the smoke of the capacious chimney-place. He has the art of drawing out the inmates, and getting at their innermost thoughts, with their quaint fancies and prejudices, and their lingering remains of superstition. He does the geography and hydrography of the parishes and chalk-downs, with a careful exactness of touch that would do credit to the Ordnance Survey. And as for the birds that people the overgrown masses of ivy, the clustering creepers on the crumbling brick-walls, the fruit-trees in the old-fashioned orchards, the copses, the hedgerows, and the rushes and sedges that fringe the brooks and half-choke the pools,—he knows every one of them by sight and note, and can not only describe their intimate habits, but seems to penetrate into their individual idiosyncrasies. He should be president of a staff college for gamekeepers and foresters; and the severest stricture we can pass on his books is, that they might be adopted as manuals by intelligent young poachers, were poachers as a rule addicted to literature. In fact, we are rather sorry to say that the new series of articles he has commenced are actually entitled 'The Amateur Poacher.'

THE COUNTRY IN 1849 AND 1879.

THE country has fallen upon hard times: and the hardship is felt all the more owing to the remarkably prosperous epoch through which we have recently passed. There is much ground for believing that during the last few years we have passed from one cycle of events into another and less fortunate one; that the change has operated upon all countries with nearly equal severity, and that, in the main, it is due to influences beyond the control of human will or the action of Governments. The present collapse of our national trade has been attended by circumstances which conclusively prove that the previous prosperity was not due to those changes in our commercial legislation to which it has been the fashion of Liberal politicians and doctrinaires vauntingly to attribute it. The world at large shared equally in the golden prosperity, and our commercial legislation has not prevented this country from experiencing the present reverse of fortune as much, if not more, than any other part of the world.

The contrast between the present hard times and the immediately previous period is very striking. We need not cumber our pages with official statistics to show the vast progress in material prosperity which our country made during the quarter of a century subsequent to 1849. We need not quote the statistics of our exports and imports, —the increased production of coal and iron, the twin pillars of our national strength,—the growth of railways and shipping, or the marvellous increase of national wealth shown by the income-tax re-

turns. The tide of prosperity which set in as soon as the first half of the century was past, made itself felt in household life as much as in the national finances. Many a parent, in that recent time, must have told his sons that they might well be thankful for the altered circumstances of life, and that they had not to live and work under the stern conditions which were familiar to their fathers. From nine in the morning to eight at night was the ordinary business hours of the middle classes, as employers or heads of offices,—which, after deducting the dining hours, was as long as the common day-labourer nowadays expects. Although it was then usual to make some curtailment of working-hours at the end of the week, the Saturday "half-holiday" was unknown, and came as a consequence of the subsequent prosperity. Incomes and the scale of living, too, such as prevailed in the period antecedent to 1850, became antiquated and regarded with contempt in the golden period which so suddenly followed. The new time brought with it colossal business and large fortunes, because steam-navigation and railways had opened up the world and vastly enlarged every man's sphere of enterprise. And most of all, it was an epoch of speculation, because the opportunities of money-making were so vast. The surplus wealth realised, and seeking profitable investment, was so large, that bold and clever speculators, especially of the "financing" class, had almost untold, and certainly unprecedentedly large, sums of money temporarily at their command; and they made the most —too often, as regards the investors,

the worst—of their gigantic opportunities. But, striking as were the colossal fortunes thus built up in a day—most of which have perished as rapidly as Jonah's gourd under the altered circumstances of the time, and still more under the pressure of the courts of law, compelling a disgorging of ill-gotten gains—these, after all, were but the froth and spray of the solid accumulation of wealth which pervaded the community. The honest masses benefited as well as the clever rogues, and the scale of living among all classes, and the sphere of material comfort and enjoyment, became larger than probably ever before happened in the history of mankind.

That "good time"—to use the simple American phrase—is wholly past; at all events for the present. Indeed it has become a reasonable question whether the community may not have to return to the hard-working habits which were common and indispensable in the youth of the generation which is now passing into the grave. Not, we trust, that the circumstances of life will retrograde, but that all classes will have to work much harder than they have been doing if the established scale of comforts is to be maintained.

But before considering this question, and the character and import of the present depression of trade regarded from a commercial and national point of view, we must glance at the matter as it is professedly viewed and turned to account by a section of our political classes—as an engine in the ceaseless war of parties. If the Liberals as a party are to be believed, the origin of the present decline of the national prosperity is exceedingly simple, and so easily susceptible of remedy that the only matter of surprise is that the nation should

have so steadily refused to listen to the panacea so highly recommended and so urgently pressed upon them by their Liberal advisers. The evil, say the Liberals, is entirely owing to the present Government being in office. "Turn out the Government"—which means put the Liberals in office—"and all will be well, and Trade will be as flourishing as ever." Against an unquestioning acceptance of this view of the matter, there is the very obvious consideration that the advice is not disinterested, and that the Liberals, to say the least, have never shown themselves more indifferent to the sweets of office than their rivals. Moreover, although the public has rather a short memory, there is a tolerably numerous section of the community who can remember having lived under far worse times than the present, under not merely one Liberal Ministry but a succession of them; and when, so far from that fact bringing any alleviation, the taxes and Ministerial Budgets were perpetually going wrong, and it became a by-word that "the Whigs were bad financiers."

Mr Gladstone, of course, has taken the lead in raising this absurd complaint against the Government. It is true the force of the complaint is considerably weakened by the fact that he mixes it up with a score of others which his fervid ingenuity has invented. He is quite ready, without being invoked like the prophet of old, to curse his Tory enemies from Dan to Beersheba. But as a vast majority of the nation refuse to accept his strange doctrine that Lord Beaconsfield's Government is ruining the empire and degrading Old England in the eyes of the world, they may likewise be sceptical of Mr Gladstone's notion that the cause of the commercial depression is the exist-

ence of a Conservative Government. So powerful is the spirit of party that even Lord Hartington stoops to folly like this, and in his speech at Liverpool he actually took credit for his moderation in not laying the whole causes of the depression of trade upon the shoulders of the Government: "I am not going to say that this is all owing to the action of the Government, or that it is wholly the fault of the Government that distress and depression of trade really exist; but you must not suppose that the Government have nothing to do with this state of things." When charges of this kind are advanced by the official leaders, it is only natural that the smaller grade of Liberal politicians re-echo the cry,—reminding us of the similar absurdity satirised in the opening piece of the 'Rejected Addresses:'

"Who makes the price of bread and Luddites rise?
Who fills the butchers' shops with large blue flies?"

the answer now as then, being "the Tories."

All this is really a very old story—a stale trick of politicians out of office. As David Hume shrewdly observed more than a century ago, "The apprehension about a bad state of trade discovers itself whenever one is out of humour with the Ministry, or is in low spirits." But a peculiar aspect of the case at present is the double voice which proceeds from the camp of the political complainers. The Liberals have one voice for the platform, and another for the lecture-hall. Mr Mundella, who inveighs to his Sheffield constituents against the badness of trade as a consequence of the Ministerial policy, eulogises our present commercial and manufacturing position before the Statistical Society, and repels all adverse statements as mere fictions of Pro-

tectionists. Indeed he maintains that all that is wanted to uphold our industrial supremacy is for other countries to maintain their Protectionist tariffs against us. Judging by present appearances, Mr Mundella may be fully content; for his only ground of apprehension—viz., that other countries should follow our example in adopting Free Trade—shows no signs of being realised. Mr Shaw Lefevre, again, takes up the same line in still more roseate spirit. In his inaugural address to the Statistical Society, he gave a positively charming picture of the present depression of trade. There is abundance and plenty in the land, he says; so that although wages are nominally low, they are really high, or at least quite satisfactory. The falling-off in our exports and imports "merely shows," he says, "that there is a great falling-off in the investment of our capital and savings abroad;" and he adds, very justly in our opinion, that it would be much better if our spare capital were henceforth invested at home—as "in land-improvement"—than in foreign countries. The effects of our bad harvests, he further says, "are already past"—an opinion which we regret to say we cannot hold, because the losses which our farmers have sustained during the three bad years, which Mr Caird estimates at about £200,000,000 in crops alone, cannot be wiped out in a few months. Again, he dwells upon "the advantages of periods of depression, to which the present is not any exception,—even to the trades immediately concerned"—that is, suffering. Such periods, he says, promote invention and economy: they also "compel the break-up of a great deal of obsolete machinery," and at the same time clear out all the

rotten or too speculative firms. "It is notorious," he says, "that the firms which succumb at such times are, with very rare exceptions, deserving of their fate; and there is no reason to believe that the process of clearance of unsound traders has as yet been carried too far." This is a very cheerful view of the matter, and it has often been heard before during commercial crises, either from non-commercial men or large capitalists, who like to see their rivals swept away: but the opinion is both harsh and unjust. No doubt the rotten firms fall first, but many an honest trader falls likewise, simply because his capital, fully sufficient for ordinary trading, cannot bear the loss of successive years of no profits.

The thirty years which separate us from 1849 have included, and have in great part been occupied by, the most remarkable epoch of material prosperity which the world has hitherto witnessed. Every civilised country—self-isolated China alone excepted—has shared in this prosperity. The grand feature, and cause, of that widespread prosperity has been the marvellous expansion of industrial and commercial energy, which has shown itself most strikingly in the growth of International trade. And the three prime factors in this industrial movement have been gold, railways, and steam-navigation. These combined agencies have vastly widened every man's, and every nation's, sphere of action,—bringing distant countries into close contact, and thereby opening new markets for goods, and consequently giving both labour and capital a new motive for energetic employment. But for the new gold-mines, this vast expansion of international trade would have been impossible. The new supply of specie was in-

dispensable to meet the enormous investments of capital, and the vast trade-balances between country and country, and most of all with India; and but for them, an exorbitant Bank-rate would speedily have checked the growth of foreign trade, from which the whole world has so greatly benefited. The vast benefits to mankind from the California and Australia mines, it is needless for us to do more than allude to; for they were clearly perceived and described in anticipation in the pages of the Magazine at the very outset, by the late Sir Archibald Alison, at a time when all the leading authorities in political economy (strangely, as it must now appear) foreboded nothing but evil from the discovery of those new stores of the precious metal. The beneficial influence of the new mines upon the commerce of the world is now fully recognised,—so much that the mere decline in their productiveness has recently begun to excite serious apprehensions, and (over-hastily) to be invoked as one of the causes of the present depression of trade.

A glance at the facts of the case will suffice to show that the recent remarkable outburst of trade and prosperity has been owing, not to causes (whether legislative or otherwise) peculiar to our own country or to any other. Great as has been the expansion of British trade, the increase in the other leading countries of the world has been still greater. Between 1850 and 1873, British trade (taking imports and exports together) rose from 186 to 570 millions sterling—that is, has trebled; but that of France rose from 74 to 291 millions, or became fourfold; and that of the United States from 60 to 235 millions, or likewise quadrupled,—as the trade of India has also done. Thus, rapid as the increase of British

trade has been, it has been greatly surpassed by each of these other chief countries of the world. This, too, has happened despite the superior good fortune enjoyed by this country. It is to be remembered that, during the period in question, France was prostrated by the German invasion and the enormous war-indemnity exacted by the victors; while the United States suffered from the dire Civil War, which caused its trade greatly to retrograde during its continuance. Indeed it was not until 1869 that the trade of the United States began to expand above the limits which it had reached in 1860.

This general expansion of international commerce has been steadily in progress throughout the whole period of remarkable prosperity—viz., since 1850. Nevertheless, in the face of those facts, Liberal politicians have persistently referred to the growth of British trade as a peculiar consequence of our adoption of Free Trade! There could not be a more preposterous pretension,—seeing that the most strictly Protectionist countries have progressed much more rapidly than our country has done. As even Mr Fawcett admits, it is such procedure—such a gross exaggeration of the advantages of Free Trade—that has produced the present discontent with our commercial legislation. Believing in the appeal to results, so confidently made by the Liberal chiefs and doctrinaires, even a portion of their own followers, the manufacturers and traders, now quote the superior commercial progress of Protectionist countries, like France and the United States, as a proof that Free Trade is a mistake. Every thoughtful man knows that the question between Free Trade and Protection is not to be determined by such facts, important though

they be. Indeed there is a fundamental mistake underlying the whole case. Just as, according to the old saying, a shoemaker thinks “there is nothing like leather,” so politicians are prone to imagine that “there is nothing like legislation.” The progress of every country depends upon far more powerful agencies than those of fiscal laws. The experience of the last thirty years—more strikingly, perhaps, but in perfect accord with still older experience—shows that nations, and even the whole world, may pass from severe adversity to glowing prosperity and back again into very hard times, wholly irrespective of the widely various or directly contrary legislation of the several countries so affected.

Seldom has so untoward a change as the present long-continued depression of trade come upon us, and more or less upon the world at large, so unexpectedly, and from influences which at the outset appeared vague if not inscrutable. Prolonged experience, however, has cleared away all uncertainty on the subject. It is now manifest that the change has been owing to the industrial enterprise and the production of manufactured goods having temporarily outstripped the requirements of the world, and to the occurrence in our own country of two untoward events entirely extraneous to trade. As regards “over-production,” it is unfortunately true that there are millions of people both in this and in other countries whose wants for clothing and other manufactured articles are most inadequately supplied; but these wants cannot make themselves felt by what is technically called an “effective demand,”—those millions of people cannot offer a remunerative price for the goods which they so much want,—

in short, they cannot buy. In like manner, every country, even our own, would still be the better for more railways; but the want for such works, or the wealth of the country which needs them, is not great enough to pay a remunerative price for their construction. It is in this sense of the word that there has been over-production. The maximum limits of Consumption—using the word in its widest meaning—were reached or somewhat exceeded in 1873. But such an event, of itself, did not necessarily entail a great reaction and long-continued depression. Had the facts of the case been observed at the outset, all that was needed was, hardly to curtail, but simply not to further extend the enginery of production, and the ever-growing requirements of mankind would have sufficed to maintain prices at an ordinary level. But the large profits made in 1872-73, at the very time when the limits of consumption had been reached, impelled our manufacturing classes, the coal and iron trades included, to extend their operations, investing a vast amount of capital in new works and factories. This capital has yielded, and still yields, no profits or interest: for the present, the effect is the same as if it were lost. Two other great losses of wealth have contemporaneously befallen the country, and unfortunately of a far more severe kind, because absolute and irrecoverable. The first of these was the collapse of the Foreign Loans in 1874-75, whereby a large portion (not exactly determinable) of the reserve-wealth of the community was swept away. And secondly, and most severe of all, there was the great loss occasioned by the succession of bad harvests in 1875-76-77. The Foreign Loan mania was almost an exact repe-

tition of an old disaster. Our people had made large profits in the immediately preceding years; foreign Governments, or speculators in their name—Turkey, Egypt, Peru, even desolated Paraguay—took advantage of the general hopefulness and plethora of wealth to ask for Loans, offering very high interest; and the British public rushed into the snare, just as they had done exactly fifty years before! Now, as in 1825-26, these Foreign Loans failed,—making a serious inroad upon the reserve-wealth of our people.

Any one—even the most bigoted and credulous of political partisans, who is ready to attribute every change for good or evil in the fortunes of the nation to the mere existence of a Whig or Tory Ministry—any one who reads the history of this country, or of any other of which we have a record of something more than mere wars and dynastic changes, cannot fail to observe the synchronism of good or bad harvests with good or evil times in the entire condition of the nation, in its sentiments and politics as well as in its social and material wellbeing. Turn over the pages of British history since the beginning of the present century, and it will be seen that general suffering and political discontent and agitation always have attended a succession of bad harvests, while political content and general prosperity have gone hand-in-hand with a series of abundant crops. Compared with these events of Providence, the greatest triumphs of legislation are dwarfed. "The stars in their courses"—the cycle of the seasons, of which we now begin to have clear but still only partial glimpses—dominate the wellbeing of the nations far beyond forms of government, imperial edicts or Acts of

Parliament.* Reform Bills and fiscal improvements are good in their way,—they are the most we can do; but as regards the comforts and wellbeing of the community, and of each home and family in the land, the best measures of legislation cannot compare with good harvests, the gift of the seasons. In like manner, the discovery of the gold-mines, the accidental unveiling of the hidden treasures of the earth, did more to produce the remarkable prosperity which the present generation has enjoyed than the wisest contemporaneous government or legislation of mankind,—as is manifest from the fact that, however various the forms of government or the kinds of legislation, all countries have benefited nearly alike, and especially those which, like India, France, and the United States, have lived under political conditions and commercial legislation entirely different from our own. The goodness or badness of the seasons similarly affects the condition of nations in a manner which it is impossible for the wisest human action either to create or to efface.

In this respect, the experience of the last few years has taught us anew a lesson which had wellnigh become forgotten. Since the dearth which attended, and far more than arguments contributed to produce, the abolition of the Corn Laws, this country until recently has been happily free from any series of bad seasons; and it became a matter of

general belief that the evil arising from this source had been obviated by the free importation of the chief article of food. Our people have had the great blessing of cheap bread, even when the harvest was bad. And again and again have we seen it vauntingly remarked in the newspapers, and sometimes by leading politicians, that bad harvests did not matter now that the harvests of all the rest of the world were ready to be poured into our ports and markets. At the present time this abundance of supply is more striking than ever; because the recent extension of railways and swift-sailing iron steam-ships now bring to us the harvests of regions previously entirely inaccessible,—opening up the inland wheat-growing steppes of Russia, and bringing cheaply to Liverpool the fine wheat which not six weeks before had been standing like golden wealth in the broad valleys of California. Wheat for some months past has been selling in England at only twenty shillings the sack: and thus, so far as shown by the price of food, our country was never in a more fortunate condition. But the loss produced by bad agricultural seasons is as heavy now as it was before the Corn Laws were abolished. The burden of loss is shifted,—that is all. It now falls wholly upon the agricultural class, instead of being shared by, and falling chiefly upon, the rest of the community. The country still suffers, to an equal extent as before,

* Apart from less permanent effects, good or bad agricultural seasons greatly affect the growth of population, as Mr T. Doubleday has shown. Also in an article in the 'Edinburgh Review' (1829) we found the following contrast drawn: The year 1801 was a season of extreme scarcity,—the number of births registered in England and Wales was 237,000, and the number of registered burials was 204,000. On the other hand, 1804 was a year of plenty, and there were so many as 294,000 registered births, and only 181,000 registered burials. Thus in the good season there were 57,000 more births and 23,000 fewer deaths compared with the bad season, making a difference of 80,000 in the numbers of the people.

from the loss; and although its incidence be primarily restricted to a single class, the impoverishment of that class reacts upon the entire community. A fact so obvious as this ought never to have been forgotten, and under the pressure of adversity it is being acknowledged anew.* How serious the loss has been, from the bad harvests of 1875-76-77, is readily calculable. Mr Caird, the recognised authority upon the subject, estimates that the produce of the crops in an ordinary year amounts to £260,000,000; and in a good year the amount must rise to fully £300,000,000—indeed, thirty years ago, the latter sum was taken as the value of merely an ordinary harvest. Thus, at the lowest estimate, the produce of our crops alone greatly exceeds in value the entire Export trade of the kingdom, including coal and iron, as well as all kinds of manufactured goods. And besides this, there is the value of our flocks of sheep and herds of cattle. During the three bad years through which we have recently passed, Mr Caird estimates that the crops have yielded only about 75 per cent of the ordinary produce,—a loss of £200,000,000 during the three years. In fact the result has been the same as if out of four years there had been only three harvests. The animal produce of the farm likewise declined seriously during these three years; the number of our cattle having decreased by half a million, and of our sheep by upwards of two millions.

The agricultural class is still by far the largest section of the nation, both in numbers and in the value of its produce; and the impoverishment of so great a class must de-

press the fortunes of the entire community. The very cheapness of food, which veils this loss from the ordinary observer, is a sign and proof of the diminished wealth of the farmers; because it shows that, while losing three-fourths of an entire harvest during the three years (equal to upwards of £200,000,000 at ordinary prices) the price which they have obtained for their produce has been even lower than usual. It is needless to say that the evil results of an inclement season upon the farmer are now wholly unmitigated. His expenditure is as large in a bad season as in a good one, although the produce of his labour and expenditure are seriously diminished. Indeed the costs of farming are actually larger in a bad season than in a good one; because of the extra weeding and tending of the soil, and still more owing to the protracted labours of harvesting during a bad season, which in this country always means a wet one.

It is obvious that this serious, and, in many cases, total loss of income of the agricultural class, must have greatly injured the Home market for manufactured goods and commodities of all kinds. The farmers have not their ordinary means of purchase. And if we add to the 200 millions and more lost by the agricultural class, the large sum lost by the wealthy and investing class by the failure of the Foreign Loans, which may be safely taken at 100 millions, it is easy to see how serious must have been the consequent depression in the home market, of the purchasing power of the nation at large. Either the home market must have been depressed by a diminished ex-

* See Paper on "The Recent Fall of Prices," read by Mr Giffen before the Statistical Society in January.

penditure to the extent of about £300,000,000, or else the community must, proportionately, have been consuming a portion of their reserve-wealth. That this latter process has been in operation to a considerable extent, we see too much reason to believe; and in so far as this has occurred, the purchasing power of the nation must be proportionately diminished for some time to come. We can even trace the effect of the recent loss of wealth in a somewhat curious manner, in the present condition of the Export trade. Since 1873, the value of our exports has declined to the extent of 60 millions—having fallen from 255 to 195 millions: nevertheless a report issued by the Statistical Department of the Board of Trade states that, if allowance be made for the fall of prices which has occurred in the interval, it will appear that the *quantity* of our exports is almost as large as it was at the maximum point in 1873. So far as this view of the case is correct, it shows that our manufacturing classes, the coal and iron trades included, now find themselves compelled to *send abroad a large portion of their produce which usually they find a market for at home*. It is manifest that our manufacturing classes have curtailed their production; for, were it not so, there would not have been the closing of mills and coal-pits, blowing out of iron furnaces, and general lack of employment among the working classes. If, then, the quantity of exported goods be as great as in 1873, it shows that goods are now being largely exported simply because a market for them cannot be found as usual at home. Nor does this export take place merely because the *ordinary* prices cannot be obtained in the home market, but because the purchasing power of

the community is so much reduced that the goods cannot be so disposed of even at a reduction of 20 or 25 per cent,—which is the estimated reduction in the “declared value” of our exports made in this Board of Trade report, and which is required to justify the view of the case therein expressed. This is a striking proof of the value and influence of the home market, which is immensely superior to all the foreign markets put together. Indeed, as we have shown, the agricultural crops by themselves still greatly exceed in value the whole exports of the kingdom. Accordingly, the prosperity of our Foreign Trade, important though it be, is trifling compared to the prosperity of our home trade. It is an important supplement to it, and also an indispensable one. A large foreign trade has become a natural and necessary condition of our national life. It is alike the cause and the consequence of our population being far more numerous than the food-producing powers of the soil can support. We no longer live by the productive surface, but also by the subterranean treasures of our country. Our stores of coal and iron give employment, directly or indirectly, to millions of our people beyond those which can be employed upon the soil; and in turn, it is those minerals, and the manufactures which they so greatly promote, which, being exported, supply this extra population with food, while also bringing back those commodities of comfort and luxury which our wealth enables the community to procure.

It is this condition of our country, this excess of population compared with our power of producing food—a condition which has been steadily growing—which has made the free import of food a matter

now beyond argument. A country like France or the United States, which is so favoured by soil and climate that its people can fully supply themselves with food while largely engaging in manufacturing industries, may do as it pleases: it may scout the theories and maxims which are held conclusive in favour of Free Trade by English politicians. But for our country, Free Trade has now become indispensable, irrespective of the wisest doctrines of political economists. In this respect, and for illustration, we might liken it to the question of Parliamentary Reform—which means, and has been, a continuous lowering of the franchise. No impartial and competent thinker will say that the grand British Empire is more wisely and efficiently governed, as a whole, in consequence of the masses taking a direct part in the government.* But the change has been inevitable—that is the prime fact: and also it has been attended by a political contentment at home without which the wisest administration of the empire would have been robbed of its natural benefits. Whatever else Free Trade in corn has done, like our Reform Bills it has “sweetened the breath of society,” and given us the inestimable boon of domestic contentment. As the late Sir Archibald Alison pointed out, the complaints of the working classes during hard times are no longer directed against the Government

or Constitution,—as used to be the case, under the influence of political agitators of the Liberal party. Capitalists and employers of the Liberal school can no longer beguile their operatives by telling them that low wages are all owing to Government, and that they would always give high wages if Parliament would only give them freedom of trade. The working classes now realise the position: it is a question between employers and employed, between capital and labour. During the last thirty years, “Strikes” have taken the place of mutinous disturbances, and Trades-unions have displaced Chartist Leagues. The strife is still unfortunate, often deplorable: but at least the true issue has come clearly into view; and the working classes now know that wages and employment are matters beyond the power of any Government in this country, and the discontent which at times is inevitable among them no longer disturbs the public administration and the fabric of government.

Unfortunately, the ignorance and bigoted selfishness of the working classes—not all of them, we are glad to say, but a very large portion of them—although no longer a cause of political disturbance, are now proving suicidal for themselves, and a serious peril to our industrial commonwealth. Every class is justified in looking after its own interests. Trades-unions and strikes are perfectly legitimate combina-

* According to Lord Dufferin, a shrewd and highly competent observer, the experience of manhood suffrage is bringing that system into disrepute both in Canada and the United States. At the banquet recently given in his honour by the Reform Club, the ex-Governor-General of Canada said, that if any Liberals went to Canada, “I think it right to warn them that they will have to accustom their ears to some very strenuous cries for the protection of native industries; that many of those native institutions to which I have referred as constituting the polity of Canada are very severely criticised, and that some of them at least run the risk of being abolished; and that there seems to pervade the entire continent of America very grave misgivings as to the utility of universal suffrage.”

tions; but, like everything else, they may be carried to a calamitous extent. At present, they seriously aggravate the depression of trade, and tend to make it permanent, while proving fatal to the very class which employs them. The working classes, or a large section of them, require the most earnest words of warning which can be addressed to them. With their strikes, their shortened hours of labour, their diminished pride and conscientiousness in their work, and their want of education to see beyond immediate to future profits and employment, they are ruining the commercial eminence of the country, and killing their own prosperity. This truth and warning to the working classes have been forcibly expressed, in a letter which has gone the round of the newspapers, by Mr John Burns, the great Glasgow shipowner. While sympathising with the efforts made to relieve the distress prevailing in his own city as well as elsewhere, Mr Burns points out that no eleemosynary machinery, whether private or public, could long make head against a loss of hold upon the markets of the world; and he implores the working classes to lay to heart what he has just witnessed on board a steamship, the *Gallia*, now apparently being fitted out on the Clyde. The entire pannelling of this new vessel has been done by Japanese carpenters; the iron fittings came from abroad; and Belgian artificers, "last Saturday," were laying the wooden parquetry on the floors of the saloon and cabins. At one o'clock on that day the local workmen all streamed out of the ship, for the half-holiday which they have got during the recent years of high prosperity; whereas the Belgians begged to be allowed to stay until dark and

finish their work—asking no extra pay for overtime, but simply wishing to make a good and speedy job of their task, and to earn the character of faithful hands. Mr Burns naturally asks how the hard-and-fast limit of fifty-one hours in the week, laid down by the local trades-unions, can face honest competition like this, which in a thousand other cases is pushing into all the gaps voluntarily made in our trades by the working classes themselves. "The ignorant blindness of British labourers," says Mr Burns, "is nuts for the foreigner to crack, and is ruining our country and our countrymen. The demands of our workmen are fast becoming so unreasonable as to put it beyond the power of employers to accede to them; and, unless with the aid of foreign workmen unfettered by trades-unionism, or otherwise, there can be obtained a fair day's work for a fair day's pay, British capitalists will simply have to abandon the development of commercial industries for sheer lack of ability to conduct them profitably. Here we are, in a time of languishing trade, and spring coming on, with our working men throwing down their tools at five o'clock in the afternoon and one o'clock on Saturdays, when I and hundreds of men are in the thick of our work, and could never pretend to compete with the world, if we were to be circumvented by mechanically limited hours of labour." Commenting upon this letter, in a very able article, the '*Daily Telegraph*' says:—

"There is no branch of industry in which the foreigner does not at present struggle to supplant the British workman. We take up a trade journal, and, opening it at hazard, we find that American and German pencil-cases are competing successfully with local goods in Birmingham—

ham ; that Japan is sending excellent and cheap boots, made of American leather ; that the high-class glass trade is rapidly going to France ; that steel rails from Philadelphia are underselling those of the North ; that in the paper, carpentering, lock-smithery, and even cloth and calico markets, English-made articles are being thrust every day aside by Belgian, Norwegian, and American commodities. Look where we will, the industrial products of the foreigner threaten our own more and more keenly every year, not merely by qualities of taste, skill, and material, but by that cheapness of manufacture which comes from longer hours, lower wages, and greater frugality and temperance. Side by side with these alarming manifestations, what do we behold in the centres of British industry ? Everywhere strikes, strikes, strikes ; linen-hands at Forfar, carpenters at Dover, shipbuilders at Jarrow-on-Tyne, stone-masons at Ashton, tailors in the Potteries, joiners at Durham, mill-hands at Blackburn, dock porters at Liverpool ; but all with what consequence ? Invariably, and whether the men win or lose their fight, with the consequences of driving fresh nails into the coffin of British supremacy in trade."

Our working classes must remember that "unrestricted competition" is a system of the widest application ; Free Trade includes the importation of Labour as well as of merchandise ; and "buying in the cheapest market" applies to Wages as well as to Prices. Already there is a large influx of foreigners, in our counting-rooms as well as in the labour-market. But it will be a sorry day for England if, through the ignorant selfishness of our working classes, our labour-market becomes stocked with foreigners,—as befell Italy under the Emperors, when cheap foreign labour displaced not only the old tillers of the soil, but the artisans in almost every branch of industry.

Such, then, is the condition of

affairs under the present depression of trade. The causes of the depression have been due, first, to a cause beyond human control—viz., three bad seasons in succession ; secondly, to a reckless trust, born of a greed for large gains, in the solvency and good faith of various foreign States ; and thirdly, to over-production on the part of our manufacturing industries,—yet which over-production would not have been serious in its effects but for the loss of wealth and depression of the Home trade produced by the two other causes—viz., the bad harvests and the failure of the Foreign Loans. For the future, we think, the position is full of hope. A repetition of the Foreign Loan mania is impossible for many years to come. Secondly, bad harvests alternate with good ones, apparently in cycles ; and the likelihood is, that the ensuing seasons will be favourable, and we trust will reimburse the great agricultural class for a large part of its recent losses. The third cause of the depression, and the one to which public attention has been too exclusively directed—namely, the over-production of our manufacturing classes, and the temporary reaching of the limits of consumption—has likewise a hopeful side ; especially owing to the vast stock of industrial plant of all kinds now existing in the kingdom, ready to come into play when the present crisis is past. As already said, the mere reaching of the limits of consumption in 1873 need not have occasioned any disaster ; it was the great contemporaneous *extension* of manufacturing and industrial plant, and of shipping for the conveyance of the products of the new factories, mines, and iron-works, which produced the greater part of the disaster,—the capital invested in these new works being

temporarily lost, because yielding no interest or profit. But the consuming power of the world is certain to progress anew, producing a revival and further expansion of trade; and when this stage comes, there will be ample and profitable employment for all the industrial plant, so prematurely erected under the elation of 1872-73.

How soon this change will come, or how long it may be of coming, we do not assume to predict. But, as Lord Beaconsfield has said, the fact that trade is reviving in the United States renders it probable that a similar revival will soon follow in this country. Moreover, let us take comfort in remembering how sudden was the change from severe depression in 1869 to the golden years which immediately followed. In the spring of 1870, the depression was so severe that the necessity for a system of State-aided emigration was brought before Parliament, together with other motions in connection with the distress of the working classes; yet before that year came to a close trade was already on its progress to that marvellous expansion which, with its extraordinary rise of wages, for three years filled to overflowing the exchequer of the Gladstone Government. It is almost too absurd to ask if that remarkable outburst of commercial prosperity was due to the Ministry then in office, or if the present depression be owing to mere Ministerial changes; but if any one imagines that commercial prosperity or adversity is to be credited or debited to the Ministry which happens to be in office, it will widen such a person's understanding of the case to bear in mind that a Liberal Ministry has been in office during every one of the great Commercial Crises within the last fifty years,—in fact, on every such

disastrous occasion since that of 1826. The country was under a Liberal Ministry during the crises of 1837 and 1839; a Liberal Ministry was in office, and Free Trade in operation, during the crisis of 1847,—again in 1857,—again in 1866,—and again in 1873, when the crisis in November of that year commenced the depression from which the country has not yet recovered. And immediately after each of the three last of those commercial disasters—viz., in 1858, in 1866, and in 1874—the Conservative party came into power, and succeeded to the legacy of disaster left to them by their Liberal predecessors.

The present depression of trade will be remembered in the future not so much from its severity as from its long continuance. It has come upon us stealthily and slowly. Every one expected it would soon pass off, and, so believing, no one was willing to reduce his trading operations or his personal expenditure in accordance with his actual circumstances,—hoping that the golden stream of trade would soon be in full flow again. In December last, however, the alarm began; some London newspapers for a week or two published the news of the day in regard to strikes, pauperism, and lack of employment, under the heading of "The National Distress." Charity at once put its beneficent organisations at work: but no sooner were such investigations instituted than it appeared that the belief in the distress was immensely exaggerated. The Charity Organisation Society found that, except to a small extent at the East End, there was no unusual distress in the metropolis. And, generally, it was found that the exceptional distress was occasioned mainly by the many weeks of continuous frost, which entirely stopped

numerous branches of outdoor labour. Indeed we believe it is the fact that the special sufferers from the present crisis have been the middle classes,—upon whom, owing to loss of trading and of farming profits, the collapse of the Foreign Loans, and the widespread ruin occasioned by the great bank failures, the recent hard times have fallen heavily. At the same time, a loss of employment to the working classes is a more disastrous affair than a large reduction of wealth (we do not mean a total loss of fortune, such as has befallen so many families in Scotland) to the middle classes; for in the latter case it means only a reduction in the comforts of life, whereas in the former it means actual starvation.

It appears from the official returns that the number of persons in receipt of public relief, both indoor and outdoor, in the closing quarter of last year, was 20,000 more than during the similar period of 1877; but the proportion is still only 27.5 out of each 1000 persons in the kingdom; whereas in the last quarter of 1870 the proportion was as high as 42.4 in the thousand. It cannot, however, be concluded from this fact that the want of employment at present compared with 1870 is so much less as these figures would imply, because the working classes have largely added to their reserves in the interval. They have not wasted all the fruits of their high wages in 1872-74; and thereby they can longer withstand a loss of employment without coming upon the poor's-roll. Indeed, the most comforting fact under the present depression of trade is, that the savings of the working classes as a whole are still going on; for it appears from the savings banks' returns that in the months of January and February of the

present year the deposits in these banks have been fully one-third larger than the withdrawals.

It is the contrast with the recent brilliant commercial prosperity which makes the present depression of trade appear exceptionally severe. During the winter of 1869-70, the condition of the working classes was worse than it is at present,—not in Scotland, which now suffers heavily, but certainly in the rest of the kingdom. The extraordinary outburst of prosperity in 1872-73, the most remarkable which this country ever witnessed, makes the present gloom appear darker than it really is. It is now pretty generally recognised (as Alison in these pages maintained at the outset) that our own country and the world at large has been passing through an epoch of exceptional prosperity,—produced not by legislation peculiar to the British Isles, but owing to influences operating beneficially upon the world at large,—notably by the new gold-mines. These mines are now on the decline, while the industrial agencies to which the new gold gave free scope appear for the time to have accomplished their utmost, having temporarily outstripped the limits of consumption. But the high level of material comfort which has thus been attained is not likely to be lost, although at present we must work harder than of late to maintain it. Probably a new epoch of prosperity will be marked by the introduction of new industrial agencies, as the last was: and any one who considers the manifold inventions now at work in the laboratory, or tentatively on a larger scale, will not despair of a further development of industry and commerce as remarkable as that through which the present generation has passed.

How much this country has ad-

vanced, both in material prosperity and in political contentment, during the present generation, may be readily shown by looking back upon the condition of the country thirty years ago, or down to the close of 1851, at which time the new gold-mines began to quicken industry, and to start all countries upon a remarkable career of prosperity. If, in making this retrospect, we introduce a tinge of party politics, it is only because of the foolishness, or else malignity, of the Liberal leaders at the present moment, who assume to attribute the present commercial depression to the fact of their no longer being in office. Well, take the twenty years ending in 1851, throughout which time the country was under a succession of Liberal Ministries, except during the only three good years of the period, when the Conservatives were in office. Yet in those three years, 1843-45, however wise might be the fiscal improvements of Sir R. Peel, the prosperity was really owing to a succession of fine harvests, and the accession of gold from the new Russian mines into the Bank of England, whereby credit was greatly increased, and trade was promoted by an unusually large supply of money. The gold in the Bank of England rose to 16 millions, or three times as much as previously; while Consols rose above par, for the first time on record, standing at 101½. Excepting this transient prosperity, when the Liberals were out of office, the whole twenty years subsequent to the first Reform Bill were marked by commercial adversity and bitter political discontent. The Reform Bill utterly failed to improve the condition of the country, because it could not possibly remove the general suffering. The agricultural classes suffered quite as much as the others; rick-burning

and other forms of incendiarism were widely prevalent, owing to the savage discontent arising from the poverty of the labourers; while the farmers themselves suffered so severely that, as Mr Fawcett records, no less than five Commissions upon the Agricultural Distress had been appointed by the Government between 1815 and 1841.

At the end of the ten years of Whig rule, the condition of the country was thus described by a contemporary observer: and if the picture be somewhat overcoloured, it was, at all events, painted by an ardent Liberal, and has been endorsed as correct by so staunch a Liberal of the present day as Mr Fawcett:—

“The distress had now so deepened in the manufacturing districts as to render it clearly inevitable that many must die, and a multitude lowered to a state of sickness and irritability from want of food; while there seemed no chance of any member of the manufacturing classes coming out of the struggle at last with a vestige of property wherewith to begin the world again. The pressure had long extended beyond the interests first affected; and when the new Ministry came into power, there seemed to be *no class* that was not threatened with ruin. In Carlisle, the Committee of Inquiry reported that a fourth of the population was in a state bordering on starvation,—actually certain to die of famine, unless relieved by extraordinary exertions. In the woollen districts of Wiltshire, the allowance to the independent labourer was not two-thirds of the *minimum* in the workhouse. . . . In Stockport, more than half the master spinners had failed before the close of 1842; dwelling-houses, to the number of 2000, were shut up; and the occupiers of many hundreds were unable to pay rates at all. Five thousand persons were walking the streets in compulsory idleness; and the Burnley Guardians wrote to the Secretary of State that the distress was far beyond their management; so that a Govern-

ment Commission and Government funds were sent down without delay." — Miss Martineau's History of the Peace, vol. ii. pp. 520, 521.

Next let us take the years 1847-51, when the Liberals were again in office. By this time Free Trade had been completely established, but national distress was again in full force. All the manufacturing towns were in a state of the deepest prostration. The destitution and disturbances which at that time prevailed in Glasgow cannot fail to be remembered by many of our Scottish readers, and it has been graphically described by Alison, who had the best means of observing the calamity. In striking contrast with the present depression of trade, which has hardly affected the revenues of the railway companies,* the railway traffic declined to an enormous extent. The traffic returns, which in 1845 had amounted to £2640 per mile, sank in 1849 to £1780,—a decline which, as the 'Times' remarked, was "alarming, and which looks like a sinking to zero." "Crime, that sure index to straitened circumstances among the working classes," says Alison, "increased so rapidly between 1845 and 1848, that it had advanced in that short period above 70 per cent: it had swelled from 44,000 committals to 74,000." Happily there is no such increase observable at present. But the most striking of all symptoms of the national distress at that time was the decrease which

took place in the population. In the five years from 1847 to 1851, the numbers of the population fell short by nearly a million, certainly by 860,000 of what they would have been under ordinary circumstances. This decline of the growth of our population, the most remarkable upon record, was owing, as need hardly be said, partly to actual deaths from famine, especially in Ireland, and partly to emigration. The emigration in those years was produced entirely by famine and dearth of employment, and was thus quite different in character from the emigration which occurred in 1852-54, in connection with the new gold-mines. Nevertheless, despite this great weeding out of the poorer and feebler classes, pauperism existed in most appalling proportions.

"In the quarters ending July 1847 and 1848, the poor relieved in England and Wales amounted to the enormous number of 1,721,350 and 1,876,541, respectively,—of whom no less than 480,584 in the former year, and 577,445 in the latter, *were able-bodied*. In Scotland, the paupers relieved, including casual poor, rose to 204,416 in 1848, while in Ireland the number relieved in that year" [helped by the loan of £8,000,000 from the Government], "was 2,177,651. Thus in the two islands the number relieved in one year was 4,258,609, being above *one in seven* of the entire population."†

Such, then, was the condition of the country under and after twenty years of almost unbroken Liberal

* The 'Financier' (March 17) states that until the last three months of 1879 there had been no absolute decrease of railway receipts at all,—the falling-off up to that date having been only in the *rate of increase*. Taking the seventeen chief railway companies of the kingdom, the 'Financier' states their receipts as follows:—

Gross receipts for second half of 1879,	£7,220,966
" " " 1878,	7,487,339

Decrease,	£266,373
	= 3.5 per cent.

† Alison's History of Europe, 1815-52, chap. 63, § 22.

administration; and it was only during that break, when Peel was in office, that any gleam of sunshine lighted up the abiding gloom. In vain did the Whigs or Liberals struggle against the adverse current of events. Chartism or "veiled rebellion" in one form or other was rampant throughout the whole period. The Ministerial Budgets, too, were perpetually breaking down under deficits, and poor Sir Charles Wood became famous for his budgets (in Mr Disraeli's words) "withdrawn, and rewithdrawn, and withdrawn again." During that time, too, the country was actually helpless against an enemy. No fortifications, no militia, no volunteers, no Channel Fleet! As for an army,—*"I tell you,"* said the Duke of Wellington in the spring of 1852, *"for the last ten years you have not had more men in your armies than were sufficient to relieve your sentries in the different parts of the world."* And when the Conservatives took office in that year, Lord Hardinge has stated that he found only *forty guns* in the United Kingdom capable of service, and that most of these would have gone to pieces the first time they got into a clay-field!

Long continued as the present depression of trade has been, and widespread as have recently been the losses of fortune to individuals, the condition of the country cannot be compared with what it was thirty years ago, except by way of contrast. The Age of Gold has left a legacy of wealth. The condition

of all classes has been raised in the interval to a higher level. It is the labouring or wage-receiving class which always suffers more directly and immediately from an adverse change in the national fortunes, because that class lives comparatively from hand to mouth. But in this respect, which is their weakest point, the working classes have improved greatly during the present generation. Whether we look at their dwellings (bad as too many of them still are), or their furniture, or their food, this favourable change is manifest. The large consumption of butcher-meat of itself indicates the higher scale of living and comfort,—amounting as it does (exclusive of poultry and game) to fully 33½ million hundred-weights per annum, or nearly five ounces of butcher-meat per day for every man, woman, and child in the kingdom.* The working classes, too, as already said, have now no small amount of reserves against bad times, as shown by the facts that the deposits in the savings banks amount to no less than £75,000,000. Taking all these things together, there is manifestly a far wider interval than before between loss of employment and the poorhouse.

As regards the middle or trading classes—upon whom, we believe, the present depression has fallen most heavily—it must be remembered that for wellnigh a quarter of a century after 1851, they have, to use a common phrase, been *"coining money."* Their gains

* "In 1875 the inhabitants of the United Kingdom consumed 1,186,641 cwt. of beef from imported live cattle; 454,007 cwt. of mutton from imported live sheep; 71,927 cwt. of pork from imported live swine; 3,114,809 cwt. of imported dead meat—*i.e.*, bacon, pork, hams, cured beef, &c.; 15,820,006 cwt. of home-grazed beef; 8,701,451 cwt. of home-raised mutton; and 4,348,944 cwt. of home-bred pork: the total consumption of meat (exclusive of poultry, game, and other meat not classified with butcher's meat) in the United Kingdom being 33,697,785 cwt."—Mr Walford's Paper on Famines, read before the Statistical Society in February.

have been unprecedentedly great. Indeed the realised wealth of the kingdom during the twenty years between 1855 and 1875 is shown, upon official statistics, to have increased by the almost incredible sum of £2,400,000,000. Unfortunately, but like every other beneficial change, this prosperity has had its drawbacks. The love of ease and self-indulgence has mightily increased, while the desire to make wealth has grown in many quarters to a raging passion. And thus passionately thirsting for money, while averse to hard work, and equally averse to the sole other means of wealth-making—viz., personal economy—a large section of the public, alike in trade and through the Stock Exchange, have rushed into perilous ventures, and have prosecuted them to an unparalleled extent by roguery and fraud, utterly heedless and unscrupulous as to the amount of ruin which they were inflicting upon others. Also, along with a most

beneficial period of prosperity, there have been great luxury and enormous waste. If the present depression should cure those evils, it will leave behind it no permanent cause for regret. It will remove a cancer which has been eating the heart out of our people, and will prepare the nation to benefit to the full from that revival of trade and return of prosperity which, we trust, cannot be far distant. Never was the country in a better condition to take advantage of new opportunities, for never before were the costly machinery and appliances of trade and production so abundant and ready to come into play. Without a shilling of further expenditure, we are ready for a vast increase both of trade and production; and if in the interval we relearn the old virtues of honesty and economy, the new epoch may be as bright and prosperous as any part of the golden period through which our country has passed since the dark days of 1849.

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REATA; OR, WHAT'S IN A NAME.—PART II.

CHAPTER VII.—LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT ?

“From that very hour he loved.”

—ROGERS'S *Italy*.

THERE are few sensations as strange and delightful, and few feelings of surprise as pleasurable, as those we experience in finding ourselves for the first time in life within the precincts of a tropical forest.

Reata had by no means exaggerated when she said that this forest looked like an enchanted wood in a fairy tale. At every step fresh beauties disclosed themselves. Gigantic, broad-leaved trees bent their heavy lower branches down to the ground, and these had taken root again, and formed verdant bowers. Where many of these stood close together, the bowers joined into natural arcades; and under their green shade a man could walk for some minutes upright. Protected by this leafy roof from the sun's devouring rays, the ground was clothed in these spots with a thick, tender covering of green,—a velvet carpet, more perfect than our most carefully tended lawns; elastic and soft, re-

taining no impression, and giving back no sound. In the close parts of the forest, where palm and coconut trees stood crowded together, everything was one mass of unbroken green; but what variety in this sameness! Here the emerald green of the sward, and hanging over it—nay, on to it—masses of dark leaves. Large cushions of moss, in all manner of strange and eccentric shapes—like huge ottomans and footstools, into which you sank as into deep-piled velvet couches: furniture made by fairy hands, you would guess them to be; and yet nothing but blocks of stone which nature has seized upon, and covered with large mosses and little ferns more than a foot deep. So compact and springy is the covering, that in plunging your hand into its depths, you could barely touch with your fingers the hard stone beneath.

From the crevices of larger rocks, deemed too unwieldy to serve as furniture, sprang enormous tufts of

ferns, standing out boldly from their nooks, and tossed by the slightest breath of air, like plumes in the wind. Creepers of all descriptions, some with narrow-pointed leaves, others with broad, dark ones, twined round every trunk, and hung in luxuriant profusion from every branch.

Sounds of animal life enlivened this lovely solitude,—cries of animals, songs of birds, humming buzz of insects ; and now and then a rustle and a gliding movement in the grass would remind you of the presence of reptiles. Close at hand, the weak chirp of a grasshopper ; further on, the shrill chattering of parrots ; and in the far distance, the soft cooing of a wood-pigeon came from the depth of the forest. A palm-tree, stretched on the ground by a recent gale, had become the stage on which a family of young monkeys were going through a series of acrobatic feats—swinging from branch to branch, and venting their delight by incomprehensible and unmelodious sounds. At the sight of the party they scampered off to some high place of refuge.

“What do you think of my forest?” asked Reata, turning to Otto, who had hitherto proceeded silently, lost in admiration of the gorgeous display around him.

“It surpasses my most sanguine expectations ; only I have seen no flowers yet, and you promised me so many.”

“Ah, wait a little,” she answered, mysteriously ; “you are not going to be disappointed. I never make false promises. You can walk a little further, can’t you, dear old thing?” to the old lady, who was stepping along cautiously, avoiding contact with anything that might possibly conceal a snake.

“Yes, dearest, I hope so. I am beginning to think that you were

right about wanting me to leave my shawl at home ; it is always catching in the branches and getting under my feet.”

Otto hastened to disembarass his aunt from the cumbrous garment, and with the help of his arm she managed to make an easier progress now.

“There are some flowers to begin with,” said Reata, presently, pointing to a place among the trees where a pool of clear water lay framed in mossy stones, and floating on its surface were some green water-plants with white cups. “I have called it the *Monkey’s Mirror*, it is so exactly like a looking-glass. That big rock alongside is the *Headless Horseman*. But come on further ; it is near the *Giant’s Umbrella* that the best flowers are.”

“Reata, my pet, if you are going any further, I think I must sit down,” and poor aunt Olivia came to a standstill.

“Of course, I was quite forgetting,” and Reata stopped also. “Where will my Ancient——where will you sit?” she said, casting her eyes about for a convenient resting-place. This was discovered close at hand, in a broad flat stump, which, covered with the famous cashmere shawl, made a passable seat. When the two had walked a short distance, the trees seemed to be lightening, and Otto thought they must be coming to the end of the wood.

“Oh no, we are in the very heart of it,” Reata said, in answer to a question of his ; “but we are just coming to a clearing, the *Turkey’s Ball-room* ; we will be there in a moment.”

A few more steps, and they were standing at the edge of a space, almost circular in shape, and unencumbered by trees.

Otto had been so occupied with choosing his footing on the narrow

tangled path they had been following, that he had scarcely glanced ahead for the last minute or two, and was quite unprepared for the burst of gorgeous colouring which met his eyes. It was one mass of flowers. The ground was strewn with them — calceolarias, scarlet bells, tiger-lilies, vetches, set off by feathery or bladed grasses. Bright-coloured butterflies floated and hovered in the air; large pale-green ones, with the light shining through their half-transparent wings, hung in clusters on the branches.

At the further end stood a curiously-shaped old fig-tree, which proved to be the afore-named "Giant's Umbrella," and around it some cactus-bushes in full flower clustered in a luxuriant tangle.

"I should like to make a study of that fig-tree," said Otto, after having fully satisfied Reata with his admiration of the spot.

"Do you mean paint it?" she asked. "Can you paint?"

"A little; I am very fond of it, and this tropical vegetation will be quite a new field for me."

While they made their way over the meadow through the knee-deep grass, Reata stooped at every moment to gather some flower, and kept putting them into her companion's hand; so that by the time they reached the fig-tree, they both of them had as much as they could carry.

"Now for some cactuses, and then I shall have a grand sorting, and throw away what is not worth keeping. Of course I have forgotten to bring a basket, but I daresay you have got a pen-knife?"

She had sat down for a moment to take breath and disembarass herself of her flowery burden; now she sprang up and stretched to reach down a thorny branch laden with cactus-blossoms. Her hat

fell back with the movement; and there she stood on tiptoe in her white dress, her delicate fingers grasping the prickly stalk and dragging it down till the red flowers touched her hair, her upturned face flushed by the exertion, her figure displayed to perfection, while, with laughing eyes, she called Otto to her rescue.

"Baron Bodenbach," she said, impatiently, "don't you hear? You are to help me. What are you staring at? What is the matter with you?"

Ah! what indeed was the matter with him? His presence of mind seemed to have forsaken him; even his intelligence and good-breeding. Instead of springing to the lady's rescue, as was to be expected, he stood—I grieve to record it—open-mouthed, devouring with his eyes the loveliest picture he had seen in his life.

The sound of Reata's voice recalled him to a sense of his duty, and he came forward to disentangle her dress and hair, and to secure the prize for which she had striven so hard.

With what care he touched her silky plaits—handling them almost with reverence!

"Thank you for your tardy help—better late than never," and she sat down and began sorting her flowers. "You can help me now, Baron Bodenbach—for I shall never be able to tie up all these myself," indicating to Otto, by a movement, that he was to sit down too.

"Are you really going to attempt to take all this home with you?" he asked, glancing rather anxiously at the many-coloured pile, from which Reata was extracting flowers and arranging them into bunches.

"Yes—at least nearly all; it is quite simple, I assure you. You will carry all the thick prickly

flowers—cactuses, and so on—for I have scratched my fingers quite enough for one day ; and I will take all the smooth comfortable ones. Of course you don't mind pricking your fingers ?" she added, as an after-thought.

"Oh no, not at all," he replied, enthusiastically, and would have liked to add something about any pain coming through her being a pleasure, but wisely refrained.

"Now give me that bunch of golden-brown calceolarias ; don't they look lovely beside these pale-blue vetches ? I think I shall have them for the drawing-room, and the cactuses for the dining-room."

"And what are you going to do with all the others?—these trumpet-flowers, for instance, and all these azaleas ? They surely deserve a place somewhere."

"They will all get places. I am going to arrange the whole house with flowers ; that is always what I do when I have such a splendid supply : every jug and cup in the house will have to be pressed into the service."

They sat silent for a few minutes, —she intent upon her flowers, and he watching her at work, as she made up bundles, which she tied with long pliable grass-blades—selecting some flowers and rejecting others, with the energy and decision which marked all her actions.

"You are very fond of flowers, are you not ?" remarked Otto, at last, more for the sake of hearing her voice again than for any other reason, as he deemed the question superfluous.

"You are very fond of people, are you not ?" she answered, after a second's pause, without lifting her eyes, and exactly imitating the tone of his question.

"Of people?" repeated he, slightly taken aback ; "why, what has that got to do with my question ?

Of course I like amiable and agreeable people."

"And I like amiable and agreeable flowers," returned Reata, with such perfect gravity, that Otto could not refrain from laughing.

"You do not understand me," she said, colouring impatiently ; "can't you see that there is as much difference in them as in people, and that it is nonsense to talk of liking or disliking them in a body, or of caring about them at all times ? There are some days when I wouldn't have a flower in my room for worlds,—it would disturb me ; just as one does not always want society. Each flower has got its own character and its own history, just as much as we have ; and of course I only select the flowers that are sympathetic to me. Just look at this little pink cactus, for instance ; did you ever see such a silly, vacant expression ?" tearing it to pieces as she spoke ; "while its twin-sister here is as intelligent as possible."

"And do you analyse the expression of each flower before it is deemed worthy of joining in the decorations ? It would be rather a lengthy business, I think."

"But one sees that at a glance—one feels it instinctively. Don't you see now that this large white daisy is in excellent spirits ? it is laughing."

"How do you make that out ?" Otto asked, staring hard at the flower she held out towards him. "I confess I don't see anything."

"But you must see," with a gesture of impatience. "And then look at this poor purple campanilla : what a melancholy expression it has ! it is evidently dying of a broken heart. I am afraid it is in love with a star ; and it goes on waiting hour after hour, hoping that the star will come down to it :

but that hour will never come, and it would have died of grief if it had not been gathered. I am going to take it home to try and cheer it up a little."

"What wild fancies this girl has!" Otto thought, as he listened. "They would sound mad coming from any one else; but somehow they fit her quite naturally."

"And what about those pretty little pink-tinged convolvuluses?" he asked; "don't they look as innocent as doves?"

"Yes, they do; but they are the vilest, most deceitful little wretches on earth. I only brought them here to wring their necks," suiting the action to the word.

"Why, what have they done?"

"They go creeping up to other plants nobler than themselves, and coax them till they allow themselves to be twined round and round, and then they strangle their benefactors, and go on smiling the whole time in that innocent, child-like manner. I could forgive them anything but their falseness," and Reata crushed up a lot of the little flowers in her hand and flung them from her with a disdainful movement.

"Are you, then, such an enemy of deceit?"

"Of course," she answered, with a passing shade of confusion; then rapidly, as if to change the subject, "Do you see those scarlet bells there? They are the greatest furies I know: at this moment they are literally shaking with passion; I don't know exactly what it is about, but I suspect it is jealousy, because that nearest cluster of vetches has got a butterfly hovering over it, while they have none. Of course it is not right of them to show their feelings so openly; but still, it is better to be honest, and I rather like their spirit."

"You should study botany," said

Otto, "as you have so much opportunity of observing plants, and take such an interest in them."

"I tried to do so once, but I shall never try again. I hate botany. What is the good of having a set of rules which divide flowers off into classes, and teach one how to analyse them? I shouldn't care for a flower a bit better for knowing how it is constructed. Only fancy, on the very first page, the book told me to cut up an anemone. I couldn't do it—it went to my heart; so I cut up the book instead and threw it into the kitchen-fire. Now I have made a botany of my own, and have divided off flowers into far more satisfactory classes. There is a sentimental class, a fierce class, a silly class; then there is a silly-sentimental, a fierce-sentimental, and so on."

"I wonder you have not got tired of them: you must know all the kinds by heart, surely, having lived all your life in this country."

"But I have not lived all my life in this part of the country. I came here only a few weeks ago; and most of the flowers were quite new to me then. There is such a variety of them here, because it lies so high up in the hills: down in the plains there are hardly any."

"How does it come that my aunt never visited this place before? It is surely not a new acquisition."

"Oh dear, no, it has been in the family for ever so long; only Mr Boden would never stay here. He was a great invalid during his last years, and always lived at — near the sea; he fancied that no other air would suit him."

"My aunt seems very much attached to you," he remarked, presently.

"Oh yes, we are very good friends."

"I suppose," she continued, speaking rather hurriedly, "you are

surprised at your aunt having a young girl for her companion; but, I assure you, it works very well, and is far better for her than if she had somebody of her own age. I help to keep her alive, and cheer her up: it is just on the same principle that one selects a staid elderly person to take care of a lively young girl. You surely don't find anything odd in the arrangement?" she concluded, anxiously scanning Otto's face.

Otto had thought the arrangement very odd at first; but even after these few hours, he had had opportunity of observing Reata's energetic management of all the household matters—taking, in fact, all the trouble off the old lady's hands: and therefore he answered now, "Oh no, not at all, I assure you; it is an excellent arrangement, I think."

Had Otto been in a cooler state of mind, he could not have failed to notice the evident nervousness in Reata's voice and manner: as it was, these symptoms passed unobserved.

"Now I have finished," she exclaimed, springing up, and shaking from her dress all the loose leaves and fragments of stalks which clung to it.

"And what is to become of these poor rejected ones?" he asked; "do none of them deserve a place?"

"Why, there is that poor laughing daisy," she said, stooping to pick it up. "I have thrown it away by mistake. There, you can stick it in your button-hole, if you are particularly anxious to save its life; and here is one just like it for Fieha's collar."

There was nothing very flattering in the way the flower was bestowed, yet Otto took it from her eagerly.

"I shall keep it as a remembrance of my first Mexican walk," he said,

half to himself, while he secured the daisy.

"It will be dark in five minutes," said Reata; "we must be off—we have been too long already."

He followed her along the path, which in the growing darkness offered a very precarious footing.

"I think I see the black-and-white shawl through the trees," said he, after some silence; "we must be close to where my aunt is now."

"Yes, it is the Ancient—— By the by, Baron Bodenbach," and Reata stopped short on the path, "I must say something to you before we go on."

"Can't you tell it me as we proceed, Fräulein Reata; it is really getting so dark that I fear we shall lose our way."

"Leave me to take care of that; but I must absolutely speak to you before we go on another step. It is—it is—— I have been wanting all day to ask you, would you mind if I go on calling the old lady, your aunt, as I have been used to do? I tried leaving it off, as I thought you might dislike it; but the effort is too great, and will probably undermine my constitution if I continue it longer."

"Anything rather than that. Let us hear what is this title which is to cause me so much surprise!"

"Well, I have been accustomed," began Reata, nervously, "to call her—the——"

"The what? I assure you I am nerved for anything."

"*The Ancient Giraffe*," said Reata, hanging her head a little, while the words came out like a rocket.

"Is that all?" and Otto burst into a hearty laugh. "Well, if she is able to bear it, there is no reason why I should not do so."

"You see," said Reata, apologetically, "she is very tall, and has rather a long neck, it has always

struck me ; and I have often got into a disgrace for saying it."

"It was perhaps rather an odd way," began Otto.

"And so you really won't mind it?" she burst in. "I can't tell you what a relief it is! It isn't so very dreadful, after all, is it? I am sure you must often have heard young ladies in Europe calling their friends by similar names. Now haven't you?" she asked, anxiously.

"I can't exactly call to mind an instance in point," and Otto smiled to himself as he tried to fancy Countess Halka or Hermine Schwerendorf calling anybody an "Ancient Giraffe:" "but never mind; this is not Europe."

They were now close to aunt Olivia's tree-stump.

"Here we are, Ancient Giraffe!" called out Reata, running on towards her; "I hope you have not been eaten up!"

"But, my dear, where have you been all this time?" began the old lady, almost crying with agitation.

It had indeed grown quite dark now; they could not see each other's faces. The trunks could but dimly be discerned around; the fantastically-twisted branches appeared like spectres through the gloom; the sounds of animal life (the night sounds, for in the tropics there are day and night sounds) were strange and plaintive amid the rustle of the leaves.

To Otto it seemed a mystery how they were ever to get out of the wood; but Reata was perfectly at her ease on the subject. She declined his offer of going on in front to fray the passage.

"No, thank you; you would be of no use whatever. I shall take the lead. Close behind me the Giraffe must walk, and then you as rear-guard; and perhaps, if you don't mind, you will carry the Porcupine."

"The Porcupine, Fräulein Reata?"

"Yes, Fichta, of course."

"Oh, anything—I will do anything," acquiesced Otto, recklessly. "Come along, White Puppy, valuable Dromedary, or whatever your name is! But, Fräulein Reata, I cannot let you go on in advance——"

"Please be quiet, Baron Bodenbach, and do as I tell you; it is your only chance of getting home to-night. And remember, both of you, that if you step lightly and quickly, there will be less chance of being bitten by snakes. Of course, the coralillos are sometimes twisted round the branches, and will sting from above; but one must just take one's chance of that. Now let us start; remember never to lose sight of me, and to follow me as closely as you can."

"Where would I not follow her to?" Otto vaguely interrogated himself. Her admirable coolness entranced him. They were in no real danger, of course, except the usual risk of snakes; but yet their position, together with the phantom-like forms and sounds around them, was enough to shake the nerve of any woman.

As for the old lady, she was so completely upset, that being already on the point of tears, the cry of a fox close at hand set her off into a fit of sobbing.

"I cannot let you cry now, Ancient Giraffe," said Reata, imperiously; "you had better give your shawl to Baron Bodenbach to carry, or else I cannot guarantee for your getting out of the forest safe. And, Baron Bodenbach, do not let your aunt stop for a minute."

They began their march; their only light the fireflies, which darted to and fro across their path—for stars or moonlight could not penetrate here. Once they caught sight of two shining emerald eyes on a branch close to them, so close that

a sound of breathing reached their ears; but although the old lady nearly fainted with terror, nothing came of it.

A minute later there was a strong flapping sound on ahead, close to where Reata was, and Otto was on the point of rushing to her rescue.

"Don't come; it is only a *guajalote*, a wild turkey," she called out to him, "which I have frightened up from the grass."

"How is it that there is cattle about here?" Otto asked, presently; "I can hear the lowing of the oxen. Perhaps we have missed our way."

"We are all right," she answered, without turning her head; "it is the call of the night-heron which you mistake."

Now they proceeded in silence; Reata's white dress gleamed through the shade like a guiding beacon. On she walked, never hesitating for a moment as to the path; now pushing aside a heavy curtain of creepers, now breaking through small branches, scrambling over a fallen trunk, or calling out to them to take care of this stone or the straggling root of some tree.

Rich exotic perfumes filled the air and made it heavy; they seemed to have gone to Otto's head, for he was walking as in a trance, not looking where he stepped, but keeping his eyes fixed on that white form in advance. A delicious intoxication had seized on all his senses; he felt as if he could have followed her for ever.

Poor Otto! He is as yet unconscious of what has befallen him. That night in the Mexican forest is the beginning of a new era in his existence. Till now he has lived without object or aim; but to-day he has tasted Love, and everything will seem precious or worthless to him, according to whether it is or is not connected with Reata.

But why pity him? He is happy

without knowing the cause of it; and perhaps his very unconsciousness is part of his bliss. Next morning he will awake with an undefined thrill of delight at his heart—a sense that something new has happened to him; and yet not new either, for it belongs to the character of Love to fancy that its object has never been unknown. The lover can hardly realise that the time ever existed before he set eyes on the one he adores. "How could I be fool enough to imagine that life had any interest, or the world any beauty, before knowing her? Why have I wasted so many precious years of my life, which ought to have been spent in adoring? Why did I not feel, why did I not guess, that such an angel existed?" Such are the passionate though rather illogical questions which many a lover addresses to himself, after beholding or recognising for the first time the real object of his affections.

But Otto has not yet reached that point; he is still at the first supremely peaceful stage, when he looks neither into the past nor the future, but is content in the consciousness that the present moment is one of unquestioned happiness.

Has it been love at first sight in his case? Probably Otto, even after his eyes are opened to his state, will never be able to answer this question—never be able to render himself account of the exact moment when the enthrallment began.

He has loved before—frequently, in fact, and hotly at the moment; but beside the passion which possesses him now, the memory of those affections is pale and weak, or they would appear pale and weak if he could bethink himself of them now—if all else were not swallowed up in the burning light of this new love, of this love which is the truest one of his life.

But the walk through the forest came to an end at last. Otto could not forbear a sigh as they emerged

from the black shadows into the starlight, and Reata said, "We are at home."

CHAPTER VIII.—CROAKING.

"Guarda che bianca Luna,
Guarda che notte azzurra,
Un aura non sussurra,
Non tremula uno stel,"

—*Canzone.*

The hot June sun was sending its rays through the green shutters of the little study at Steinbühl. They lighted up a room not devoid of comfort, but with the stamp of shabbiness on every detail. Baron Bodenbach and his eldest son were engaged in conversation. The old man was in an easy-chair, and Arnold at the writing-table, where he had been looking over accounts; but now he had pushed away the books and was listening to his father.

"Take my advice, Arnold, and do it at once. Why not do it this week while she is here? Summer is the best time for these things; it was just in June that I proposed to my dear cousin Olivia."

"I don't see that summer or winter has anything to do with the matter; but I do think the whole business would be premature at present."

"But, my dear Arnold, what can your objections be? She is a handsome girl, and a good girl; her family is irreproachable, and she has sufficient fortune to make her a fair match for any one."

"Oh, of course," Arnold interrupted, "if I ever marry, I will marry Hermine—it would be impossible for me to think of any one else; but as she is barely eighteen, it is as well, I think, to give her a little more time to see the world in before she is tied down to our humble fortunes."

Baron Bodenbach sighed, but still returned to the charge.

"You forget the principal thing; you forget what a difference her fortune would make to us. It is very hard, struggling on as we are doing, Arnold; and it would be so easy for you to make it different."

Arnold left the writing-table, and began pacing the room; after the fourth turn he stopped before his father's chair and spoke—

"Yes, father, it is hard; I know it, and" — with a short sigh — "none better than I; but" — here he broke off and walked towards the window, and only when he had reached it he finished his sentence — "but I would hate owing anything to anybody."

His father looked greatly distressed. "So that is your real objection, Arnold; I thought it was not only Hermine's age. Your sentiments are quite the right thing, I am sure; it is best never to owe anything."

The Baron apparently did not know how to proceed with his phrase; he shifted his position in the easy-chair once or twice, and looked anxiously at his son, waiting for him to speak. But Arnold was standing at the window, with his hands behind his back, and his nose rather high up in the air — intent, it seemed, upon getting a favourable view of the trees outside through the bars of the lattice shutters.

"But surely it always was a half-

arranged matter between us," the father began, almost timidly, after a pause, "that you and Hermine should marry some day; and what is the good of putting it off longer?"

"Oh yes, it always was an arranged matter," was the answer, given rather absently; "but then"—relinquishing his study of the trees, and turning away from the window—"I think there is some good in putting it off longer. We have every hope now that our fortunes are going to undergo some sort of an improvement; by next year we may be in a different position from what we are in now, and I should then be able to offer Hermine something of what she will bring me."

"But will you not change your mind, Arnold, before that time? You know how I have set my heart on your marrying Hermine, and young people are sometimes so apt to do that."

"No fear, father," laughed Arnold; "you know I have a wholesome dread of womankind in general. Hermine is the only woman I could ever think of as my wife."

"But if you are so fond of her——" the Baron was beginning; but his son continued without heeding—

"A few years ago, when I was still serving, nothing would have induced me to take such a step—to any aspiring soldier matrimony is, in my eyes, no less than ruin; but having now given up the career, it has become practicable for me; and—in short, my mind is made up on the subject."

"Are you quite sure?" his father persisted, seemingly unable to give up pressing the point.

"I am perfectly certain," Arnold replied, drawing up his figure with a slight degree of haughtiness—a

somewhat frequent habit with him. "I think, father, that I do not often change my mind when it has been made up."

"Of course, of course not; I am quite aware of that,—you are quite right, I am sure: but just for my peace of mind, Arnold, if nothing goes wrong, next summer, next June, let us say—I could not think of binding you by any promise, Arnold, my dear boy—but will you speak to Hermine next June?"

At this moment light footsteps were heard coming rapidly along the passage towards the room.

"We need not speak on this subject again," said Arnold, quickly; "but if you wish it, it shall be next June."

The door flew open, and Gabrielle, with her Italian greyhound racing at her heels, rushed in breathless.

"A letter from Otto—a letter from Otto! and it is for you, Arnold!" she screamed at the pitch of her voice, while waving the paper wildly above her head. She had been watching at the drawing-room window, as she had been doing every day lately; and the moment she caught sight, through the trees, of the lad who served them as letter-bearer, had rushed out into the hot sun, and returned a minute later, breathless and panting, but triumphantly clasping the precious envelope.

"There now, you foolish child," said Arnold, taking the letter from her, while he looked severely at her flushed cheeks and dilated eyes, "you have run out without your hat or parasol, and have knocked yourself up for to-day. In an hour Hermine will be here, and you won't be fit to go out walking with her; you had better go and lie down at once."

"Oh no, Arnold," she implored

—and the corners of her mouth began going down ominously—"I can't lie down till I have heard what there is in the letter; don't make me—please, don't make me!"

"You are rather hard upon her, I think, Arnold," put in the old Baron, who had laid aside his cigar with trembling hands, and was sitting up in an attitude of eager expectation; "let her hear what Otto says first."

"Very well, let her stay," Arnold assented, rather ungraciously, while he opened the letter.

It was written in good spirits, but it was not long. Otto gave a brief account of his arrival and reception, and then passed on to a slight description of aunt Olivia: "In appearance my aunt is considerably older than I was led to expect—nearer sixty than fifty, I should have guessed; but climate, I suppose, has something to do with that. Although I looked out sharp, there were no traces of beauty which I could for the life of me make out; and as for the much-vaunted eyebrows, they have, I fear, been transferred, and now occupy a lower position on her face—above the upper lip, in fact."

Further on he wrote: "My aunt appears very much agitated at any reference to my father. Of course, not a word about business has passed yet between us; that is to be left for later, I suppose. She does not look as if she were going to be difficult to tackle; and I flatter myself that I shall be able to talk her over to my own views. My only fear is that her companion, who seems to have an undue share of influence over her, may try to wheedle her out of her fortune—that is, a good slice of it. If so, it is lucky I came out here to represent our interests."

Most of the letter Arnold read

aloud, only now and then judiciously skipping some phrase or expression.

"Dear Otto!" exclaimed the delighted father; "what a satisfactory letter! It is the longest I have ever known him to write—he must be in such good spirits, dear boy!"

"Well, I trust it will all turn out well," said Arnold, calmly, as he folded up the letter; "things seem to be going smooth, at any rate."

"Smooth! I think they are going brilliantly."

"Can't see anything particularly brilliant as yet," laughed Arnold, "except that they have given him food and lodging. Well, we will see."

The Baron, however, persevered in his sanguine mood. Everything was going brilliantly, according to his ideas. He saw, in his mind, splendid prospects unrolling themselves for his children. Till now their future had been an anxious thing. From their father they would have next to no fortune. Arnold would manage for himself, but Gabrielle could not; and Otto would probably not manage either, to judge from the way in which he had hitherto conducted his expenditure. On two or three occasions already, the Baron had found himself obliged to put himself to positive inconvenience in order to satisfy his younger son's creditors. The income, as it was, was slender enough to cover wants; and the payment of these bills had more than once occasioned privation of comforts, sometimes even of necessities, at Steinbühl. In fact, Otto had always been the chief anxiety. He was so impressionable, so susceptible to many things—to a pretty face, for instance—that there would always be some danger of a sudden, undesirable attach-

ment springing up, which might entangle him against his will in a *mésalliance*, and thus destroy his best chance of gaining a comfortable independence. For although nobody as much as Otto so truly appreciated and coveted that comfortable independence, and although to make a rich marriage (as has been said before) was his chief object and aim, still there was no answering for what he might not do under the influence of passion, and how far he might not lose sight, for the moment at least, of the more important point.

His father never would feel quite at rest till Otto was fairly settled down in matrimonial life; and therefore the Baron had been greatly pleased on hearing of his son's attentions to a Polish heiress, Comtesse Halka Przeszechowska. It might have been supposed that the personal experiences which the old man had undergone should have cooled his faith in any *mariage de convenance*; but it was not so, and in spite of his fancied lifelong attachment to his cousin, he was eager to make one of his sons, at least, follow his example by marrying an heiress.

Whether Otto's suit with the Polish Comtesse would have prospered ultimately, was doubtful. It could hardly have been expected that the girl's parents would be very willing to give her to a man so utterly without fortune as was Otto. The old Baron's hopes would have been still fainter if he had known what a dangerous rival Otto had in his captain. Now, however, this was different; or at least the old Baron, busying himself in thought with the matter, decided that it would be all different—that uncle Max's will or cousin Olivia's generosity would provide for them all brilliantly, and that, therefore, Otto would be in a position in

which his hopes with regard to Comtesse Halka would be almost sure of fulfilment.

As for Arnold, there never had for him been any danger of the sort before mentioned. He was far better able to take care of himself than his brother; and being so thoroughly, even exaggeratedly, aristocratic in his notions, there was no fear of his ever lowering himself by a foolish marriage. It has been said before, that Arnold had nothing of what is called "a ladies' man," and never was a favourite in women's society. From his own choice he never began conversation with a lady, and if forced into it by circumstances, was sure to start wrong topics; never paid any compliments or noticed a woman's dress; usually forgot to pick up fans or handkerchiefs, drape cloaks round fair shoulders, or any of the hundred and one little attentions which ladies think they are entitled to expect from gentlemen.

And this did not come in the least degree from shyness; but simply because he did not know how to talk to women, and did not care to acquire the art.

The only girl besides his sister with whom he was on intimate terms was Hermine Schwerendorf, the guest whom they expected to-day.

The Schwerendorfs were of an old aristocracy, possessed of a small estate, and a fortune which, although not much larger than what the Bodenbach's had, still enabled the two old people and their one daughter, Hermine, to live in a far more comfortable style than these neighbours of theirs. The intimacy between the two families had sprung up thirty years ago, when the Schwerendorfs had come to that part of the country and settled down. The Bodenbachs were then enjoying their temporary return of pros-

perity, immediately after Baron Walther had married his rich wife. Since then, their fortunes had rapidly declined, while the position of the newly-settled family had remained unchanged. But their relations to each other underwent no difference. The Schwerendorfs still continued to look up to their friends in the same way they had done when the Bodenbach name was the great name in the country. A constant intercourse was kept up between them; the young people had played together as children, and called each other by their Christian names. The old summer-house at Steinbühl had been the scene of many of their exploits; sometimes it was a fortress which Arnold defended against Otto—sometimes it was a settler's hut or a royal palace, as the occasion demanded. These were but children's games, but many a life's romance has grown out of slenderer materials. And it was so with Hermine. Imperceptibly to herself and others, Arnold became the one hero of her life. To her he was the impersonification of everything good and great and noble. All this strengthened and took shape as Hermine grew up. It coloured her whole existence, and became part of her being. In the same way, as she could not remember any past in which Arnold had had no part, she never realised that there might be a possible future away from him. Not being of an imaginative disposition, she did not, as many other girls in her place would have done, weave this romance of hers into brilliant air-castles, and paint out the years to come in all their details; but merely, when she did look into the future, she always thought of herself as Arnold's wife—and felt intensely though calmly happy at the thought that it was to be so.

In the girl's simplicity and singleness of character, the thought never once crossed her mind that this merging of her whole being into one idea, this utter reliance on one person, might prove dangerous to her peace. Fortunately there seemed to be little ground to fear the disappointment of her hopes, for the same idea had long been entertained by both families. Nothing definite had ever been said on either side, and it was only to-day that Baron Bodenbach had distinctly spoken to his son on the subject; but there existed a passive sort of half-understanding about the matter—just so much, namely, that no member of the two families would have been in the slightest degree surprised any day by the announcement that Arnold and Hermine were engaged, whereas the astonishment would have been great on hearing that either of the two was about to form another union. Arnold himself seemed in no way averse to the idea.

It was a lovely June evening, that day of Hermine's visit to Steinbühl. The heat had been intense; and it was not till after their evening meal that the three young people strolled out to enjoy the softness of the night air and the delicious fragrance of the new-mown hay. The moon had completed her second quarter, and, standing out from a cloudless sky, made everything as light as day, and far more beautiful. It lent a touch almost of stateliness to the old-fashioned house: the pointed red roof with the gable-windows looked almost grand from the end of the short, straight avenue which led from the house to the highroad; while the crazy weather-cock, which stands in such need of a new coat of paint, and is so little likely ever to get it, might be taken for a gallant pennon waving on the summit. The indescribable air of

money-want, the many little defects of repair, which the cruel hard sun shows up so pitilessly by day, are treated with far more tenderness by the gentle rays of the moon.

While the sun, with stern justice, brings out the beautiful as well as the unbeautiful, and puts them before our eyes with equal distinctness; the moon, like a tender mother, throws a veil over imperfections, and adds the charm of mystery to what is already beautiful. There is deceit in this; but it is meant kindly to us, I think.

Who would guess by this silvery light that hardly one of the bastions that support the stone wall of the garden is quite whole, or that most of the red tiles on the top are chipped or put out of place; that the once green shutters of the windows are in a state bordering on dilapidation; that the woodwork of the balcony shows on close inspection strong signs of incipient decay? But here it is not the moonlight alone which has glossed over defects, for a close covering of Canadian vine, that most beautiful of tropical creepers which have taken root in our soil, has drawn its curtains tightly round the frail columns, making it look like a huge wren's nest; green in summer, dazzlingly scarlet in autumn, and at this moment almost black, for the moonlight has no colours — only black and white.

To the right of the little avenue, the lawn is bordered by a narrow stream. A quiet, placid, to all appearances a well-behaved little stream; but in reality its course, from want of proper control, has become as unruly as that of many a wilder-looking water. It has stepped out of its boundaries, and encroached on the grass of the lawn, which under its influence has

gradually lost its firm elasticity and become soft and spongy. In fact, the wayward rivulet has created quite a little marsh around it, where reeds and bulrushes have sprung up in place of the short tufts of sward which once covered the ground. At one spot, in the very heart of the marsh, where the tallest reeds stand, the water has formed for itself a deep round hole, where it seems to lie and sulk like a spoilt child hiding its face, out of reach of anything less airy than a dragon-fly or a gnat. But the moon has found out the secret haunt, and likes to throw her brightest beams into the very depth of the pool, forcing the dark water to smile; and the stalks of the reeds look black by contrast.

There is movement and sound among the rushes and in the water — little splashes and rustlings; and if you look narrowly, you will see many little dark objects, without any definite shape, lying immovable on the surface of the pool. Look more narrowly still, and each of the shapeless objects will stare at you with idiotic goggling eyes, — countless frogs floating lazily in their native element, and recruiting strength for their daily concert.

Across the avenue, at the other side, and out of reach of the mischievous stream, the lawn presents a better figure. Even here though, it cannot be called lawn — being a cross-breed between a hayfield and an orchard. Some tardy *Maikäfers** are buzzing about, round and round the plum and apple trees, foolishly surprised at finding no blossoms. They feel out of place, for they have miscalculated their time by three or four weeks, and find, on unfolding their brown wings in the world, that they are old-fashioned already, and that butterflies and

* Cockchafer.

ladybirds are the queens of the day. Mingled with the fruit-trees, and sometimes piled against them, are small cocks of freshly-cut hay, not unlike big button-mushrooms, both in shape and colour, for they are far whiter now than by day. Each little cock has a big black shadow beside it, much more conspicuous than itself. The array of shadows is almost monotonous in its uniformity : but stay—here is an exception ; one of the little cocks at the extreme end of the field has got more shadow than it would seem entitled to. The rounded outline is broken by irregular shapes, which seem less impassable than their surroundings. Subdued voices enliven the stillness of the night, and the faint odour of a cigar mingles with the perfume of the hay.

Gabrielle had made herself a comfortable seat on the top of the cock, and was lazily pulling at the hay, with apparently no more object than that of extracting all the withered daisies and buttercups which she could find. Beside her, on the edge of her dress, her Italian greyhound couched in an attitude of graceful discomfort—its long nose, more preternaturally long than usual, sinking drowsily down upon its outstretched paws.

"How delightful it is to have Hermine here, isn't it, Arnold?" said Gabrielle, who was chiefly carrying on the conversation. "If only Otto were with us also, it would be quite perfect. What is he doing now, I wonder? What do you think he is doing, Arnold?"

The cigar-puffs went on steadily, and no answer seemed forthcoming to this sapient question. Gabrielle had some persistency in her, and attempted to rouse her brother's attention by pricking the back of his neck with a long stiff grass-stalk. This produced some effect.

"I wonder you don't ask me what I think all Otto's brother officers, from the colonel downwards, are doing at this moment!" he exclaimed, impatiently; "my chances of knowing would be just as good in one case as in the other."

Arnold was lying in a posture of oriental ease, stretched almost at full length on the grass. Perhaps it was only the deceitful moonlight which made it appear as if he were lying at the feet of Hermine. Hermine, with her back against the haycock, and her head thrown back upon it, was occupied in doing nothing.

The moonlight is full upon her face, and here also its touch has been favourable ; for, 'seen at this moment, her fine features in strong relief, the colour in her cheek softened to a delicate tint, and the strange light glancing along the coils of her heavy flaxen plaits, she looks positively beautiful ; whereas by daylight she has never been called more than a handsome girl. For a very fastidious taste, the lines about the mouth and chin are too heavy, the ripe scarlet lips a trifle too full, the blue eyes somewhat monotonous in their unvarying sweetness of expression. Her height is a trying one for a woman ; but she carries herself well, if with rather too much stateliness. In short, the *tout ensemble* of her appearance has something rather too ponderous for a girl, but which in a young matron would be quite in place, and almost perfection for the model of some ancient German heroine.

"I wish you were not so silent to-night, Arnold," Gabrielle began again in a minute. "I wish you would talk. Was there nothing more in Otto's letter? Why does he not say how many rooms there are in aunt Olivia's house? Or

what the companion is like,—whether she is young or old?”

“What can it matter,” retorted Arnold, making a change in his oriental position, “whether there are half-a-dozen or two dozen rooms in the house? or whether the companion is thirty or fifty?”

“I suppose she was not worth describing,” *Hermine* put in, mildly.

There was silence now for some minutes. *Gabrielle*, the chief talker, being subdued by the want of favour with which her topics of conversation had been received, waited for some one else to start a subject.

No one seemed inclined to do so—that is, no one but the frogs at the other side of the avenue. A solitary croak was heard across from the marsh; and another followed, and again another, until the croaking voices, answering each other, were joined in a monotonous, overpowering concert. Not such an unruly concert either, as might be supposed; for the pauses and beginnings are evidently regulated by some means or other. I have wondered sometimes what these means are; whether it is some mysterious instinct which sways the amphibious chorus, or whether they follow the lead of some one amongst them, who acts as band-master to the rest.

“There are those horrid frogs again!” burst out *Gabrielle*, forgetting her resolutions of silence; “wouldn’t *Otto* be savage if he were here! Do you remember, *Hermine*, how he used to throw stones at them to make them be quiet?”

“Poor frogs! I always was sorry for them; I find nothing disagreeable in the sound. On the contrary, I never fall asleep so pleasantly as when listening to them.”

“Oh, how can you, *Hermine*!” shrieked *Gabrielle*, with horror; “fancy listening to frogs! I always shut my window quite

tight, so as not to hear their vicious croaking voices; and sometimes I have to put wadding in my ears, or I go on hearing the sound even after I am asleep, and they haunt me all night.”

“Now, *Gabrielle* dear, are you not exaggerating a little?” put in her friend, soothingly. “How can you get so excited about such a trifle?”—for in truth *Gabrielle* had worked herself up into a state on the subject of her fancied enemies. “I cannot help liking the frogs, for they remind me of dear *Steinbühl*; and I always miss them, even at home.”

“I have no particular objection to the animals,” observed Arnold, “as long as they remain in their proper place; but we certainly had too much of their society that time ten years ago, when *Otto* and I tried to drain the lawn, and only succeeded in swamping the cellar.”

“And how angry *Otto* was with me,” said *Gabrielle*, “because I screamed when I met a frog on the staircase! He said it was ungrateful of me to cast up the frogs in his face, after he had taken all that trouble to rid the neighbourhood of the marsh.”

“Yes,” rejoined Arnold; “to this day *Otto* cannot bear being laughed at about the matter. He offered to repeat the experiment at the time, but the joint entreaties of the whole family prevailed upon him to relinquish his project.”

A pause, broken only by the croak, croak, croak of the frogs yonder.

“I wonder,” said *Gabrielle* at last, “what we will be doing next June? whether we will all sit together on the same haycock, as we are doing to-night, and *Otto* with us? Do you think so, Arnold?”

“Do I think the haycock will be the same? Couldn’t you have answered that question without re-

ference to me? I daresay we will be sitting on some haycock or other next June, and find it quite as pleasant as we are doing now," he concluded, with an odd smile lurking about the corners of his mouth. He was thinking of the half-promise he had given his father, and instinctively his eyes sought Hermine's. Some foreshadowing of the truth she must have read in his, for she looked away from him, and, as far as the moonlight would let one see, her colour deepened.

Next June! How long the time would seem till the summer came! and yet how it made her heart beat to think of what it must bring for her! With one of the heart's strange contradictions, she felt relieved that her happiness should be postponed; it would have seemed

too overwhelming had she stood on its brink.

The white mist was rising higher over the marsh, and Gabrielle shivered. Arnold started, and rose to his feet. He too had been thinking of next June, and had forgotten how bad for Gabrielle the night air was.

That night, when Hermine was in her room, she stood for long leaning out of the window into the full moonshine—watching the shadows which fell across the avenue, and listening to the dull croaking which she said she liked, and which had never sounded to her so melodious as to-night.

Her window was left open, and in falling asleep at last, the only sound which the night air carried up to her was still the same monotonous croak, croak, croak.

CHAPTER IX.—"DER HANDSCHUH."

"Herr Ritter, ist eure Lieb' so heiss,
Wie ihr mir's schwört zu jeder Stund,
Ei, so hebt mir den Handschuh auf!"

—SCHILLER.

Croak, croak, croak it sounded in at the open window, through which the morning sun was beginning to send its warm rays.

Reata awoke with a start, and rubbed her eyes violently. It was long past her time of rising, and there was no disguising the fact that she had overslept herself—a thing of most rare occurrence.

Past eight o'clock actually, the hour when she usually was on her return from her morning's walk in the forest! It was provoking to have missed it to-day. She sat up in bed and looked towards the window: on the broad low sill a large green tree-frog was squatting, giving forth at intervals the booming croak which had roused her from her slumber.

Ficha on the veranda outside, with one paw delicately raised, and

her upper lip drawn up ever so slightly, was regarding the intruder with an air of profound but silent disgust. To bark at such a low animal would have been far beneath her dignity.

"That means rain," said Reata, referring to the frog, not to Fícha, as she hastily rose and rapidly got through her toilet.

Otto had been watching the house impatiently for the last two hours; but now, fairly wearied out with waiting, he resolutely turned away and bent his steps in the direction of the farm-buildings.

"I must have a look at that roan again," he said to himself—at the same time, however, glancing back over his shoulder, to see if nobody was yet forthcoming.

"Holloa! what's this?" as his attention was arrested by the sight

of a freshly-painted yellow gig (I don't think it was exactly a gig either, in the correct sense of the word ; but it was more like a gig than anything else), evidently just arrived, for the tall white mare was steaming hot.

Otto put up his hand to shade his eyes from the sun and obtain a better view of this strange vehicle ; but at the same moment he became aware of a nearer object, a man in a yellow nankeen suit, walking briskly towards him. The colour alone would have made Otto instinctively connect the man with the gig, had not the fact of the rarity of such apparitions pointed to the same conclusion. For ten days Otto had not seen a new face—for it was ten days now since his arrival here,—and with a slight movement of something like excitement, he unconsciously quickened his step to meet this fellow-creature. Human nature has its demands ; and any man, even a man in love, will gladly hail the first face he sees, after having been debarred from society for any length of time.

In Mexico, ceremony is easily dispensed with, and the two men had soon exchanged greetings.

The wearer of the yellow nankeen suit was short and broad of stature ; he was one of those painfully fresh-coloured men often met with in our countries, but seldom in the tropics. Such men have usually got thick lips and bushy hair,—and here was no exception to the rule ; for the crop of closely-cut curls, which burst from under the brim of his wide straw hat, was dense enough to serve for foundation to some sorts of fancy-work : with a sharp pair of scissors, endless patterns could have been traced on it, like on raised velvet.

In age, the new-comer presented an appearance of about thirty-five. The first thing which attracted

attention about him was the general air of self-satisfaction which pervaded his whole person. Moreover, there was a very perceptible dash of the Hebrew about him ; and the name of Herr Emanuel Fadenhecht, under which he introduced himself, served to give colouring to this suggestion. This man informed Otto, further, that he was the junior partner of the attorney at E——, who was Miss Bodenbach's banker and man of business.

The mention of business made Otto prick up his ears. "Come, this is just the sort of gushing fellow I want," he thought ; "with a little skilful pumping, I shall extract lots of information from him."

After the unavoidable preliminaries of conversation, Otto made the first step towards pumping, by saying, in a studiously careless tone, "You have come, I presume, on a summons from Miss Bodenbach ?"

"Oh yes, just so—on a summons : it is the fourth time within the last two months ; that makes an average of once a-fortnight. Not so bad, is it ?" and Mr Fadenhecht rubbed his hands and laughed, in what he considered to be a pleasant manner.

"Miss Bodenbach keeps your time well employed then, it seems ?" Otto remarked, carefully removing every particle of curiosity from his voice.

"Yes, well employed—well employed, that's the word for it," said the attorney, shutting one eye, and with the other throwing a sidelong glance on his companion.

"Have you any notion what your mission is to-day ?"

"What my mission is to-day ? Oh no, not the slightest notion—not the slightest notion. In fact, I may say, no more notion than—than *you* have !" and Mr Fadenhecht rubbed his hands with greater

force, and shook all over with the merriment called forth by his joke.

"Is the animal laughing at me, I wonder?" was Otto's inward reflection, as he struggled hard to master his disgust. It would not do to quarrel with the man yet; he might still prove useful.

The other went on talking: "No, just so, not the slightest notion; but I have a shrewd suspicion that it is something of importance."

"Really?" put in Otto, languidly.

"Yes, just so, of importance; maybe of great importance. My principal would have come himself if it had been possible; but then, it was not possible. In fact, I may say, it was impossible. My principal is at this moment on his back with gout in his right leg"—here Herr Emanuel, by way of greater clearness, slapped his corresponding limb in a way which made Otto shudder. "He suffers acutely from gout. In fact, I may say——"

"Oh yes, I suppose he does," broke in Otto, for they were getting near the house now; "and so you have come in his place?"

"In his place, yes, just so. And I have a notion that I won't fill his place so badly either. It is not the first time," the attorney went on, giving his not over-white collar a pull up with a movement of intense complacency, "that such missions have been intrusted to me; and I may say that they were always accomplished to everybody's satisfaction. Ladies, you know"—here he again shut one eye, and this time winked with the other—"always prefer a young man to an old one, even in matters of business. Now I could tell you a case, two years ago——"

"Look here, you'll tell me all about that afterwards," interrupted Otto, with rather more warmth than was quite consistent with his rôle of *ennuyé*. Then, relapsing into

indifference, "There won't be time for it now, you see: we will have to join the ladies in a minute; it must be quite breakfast-time."

Otto tried hard to get up an artificial yawn, and then to stifle it skilfully, as he proceeded, "What splendid country there is about here! I have not begun to weary of it yet, in spite of not having stirred from the spot for ten days."

"Oh no, not begun to weary of it yet; just so, I quite understand," with a knowing look and a smile, which made all Otto's blood boil; but hastily stifling his indignation, for the moments were precious, he remarked that the establishment here could surely not be an expensive one to keep up.

"Expensive? oh dear, no, no such thing. I admire your perception—ha, ha, ha! Rich people have got their cranks, you know, sometimes. Yes, I may say their cranks, in different ways. Like to save their money in order to hoard it for their special whims and hobbies. Now there was an old gentleman"—Herr Emanuel threw one more sidelong glance on his companion, who was biting his lips in silent irritation—"an old gentleman who died two years ago near ——, and for the last third of his life had been living at the rate of four hundred dollars per annum. Well, he was found to be worth a hundred and eighty thousand dollars—a hundred and eighty thousand dollars, I tell you; and he left every penny of it, I may say, to—ha, ha, ha!—to the Government, for the purpose of having lightning-conductors put on all the public edifices; and the best of it was, that they all had lightning-conductors already, ha, ha! Yes, they all have their whims, young and old, I say, and more especially if they belong to the fair sex—ha, ha, ha!"

They were just outside the ver-

anda now, and Otto, feeling that he could not prolong the conversation without losing his temper, made a move to go in, by saying, "You must be ready for your breakfast after your long drive, and my aunt will be wondering what has become of me."

Mr Fadenhecht turned towards Otto and looked at him full for a moment.

"Ah yes, your aunt; you call her your aunt, just so."

"Well, perhaps not exactly aunt, if you take the matter quite correctly—rather first cousin once removed; but as she belongs to another generation, it is the most natural to call her aunt. The relationship is rather complicated; I don't exactly know what to call it."

He was conscious of having spoken with an assumption of dignity; but it failed to impress the auditor.

"Ah yes, just so, I quite understand," Mr Fadenhecht went on, speaking half to himself, while a smile of amusement played upon his unhandsome features. "The relationship is complicated, *very* complicated; relationships usually are. Relationships have got their conveniences and their *inconveniences*, and sometimes they turn out not to be relationships at all; *inconvenient* would it not be, eh? If you take the matter *quite* correctly—ha, ha, ha!—your aunt, just so. I can't make out, by the by, how *your aunt* can live so quietly here alone—quite out of the world, I may say; and with the exception of stray nephews who——"

"But my aunt is not quite alone at any time," Otto broke in, almost hotly; "she has always got her companion, Miss—Miss——" and here suddenly he paused; and it flashed upon his mind that he had

been ten days in the house, and did not know Reata's family name. No, he did not know her name. He had been in love with her for ten whole days, and knew nothing more but that she was called Reata. That one word had contained so much for him that he had not thought of asking more, and nobody had volunteered the information.

"Her companion? Oh yes!"—and Otto felt as if he could have kicked the man for his odious affectation of forgetfulness—"your aunt's companion, just so; but then, I always think that you get very little companionship from companions. Ha, ha, ha! Not bad, that."

"What is her name—her family name, I mean?" asked Otto, speaking very quickly; for they were already in the passage.

"Her name? The name of your aunt's companion? Why, don't you know it? She has got a German name. Her mother——"

"Oh yes; I know all about her family," interrupted the other, hastily, dreading to hear another account of the dispossessed Indian chieftain; "but I don't know her name." And he had not finished saying it when the absurdity of the idea struck him.

"What a hurry you are in to hear the name of your aunt's companion!" answered the other, with exasperating slowness. "She has got a German name, I tell you. Yes, a German name; just so. I only heard it for the first time myself a few months ago, and it was by the merest chance—by an unforeseen chance, I may say."

"What is her name? Quick!" Otto had his hand on the door-handle.

"Just so; I am coming to that."

"Her name?" said Otto imperiously.

"Lackenegg."

They were almost in the room

before the last word was said, and Reata, who was making coffee at the other end, might have heard it; for Otto distinctly saw her give a start as she turned round and caught sight of his companion. In coming towards them she looked pale, almost frightened, and glanced nervously from one to the other. Without giving any one time to speak, she greeted the attorney with what Otto considered to be superfluous politeness.

"How do you do, Mr Fadenhecht? I am afraid you have had a very hot drive. We hardly expected you so early. And so Mr Le-Vendeur was not able to come. Poor dear old man! I suppose it is the gout again? You must tell him how sorry we are."

While she rattled on with unwonted volubility, Reata kept her eyes fixed full on the attorney's face, with a look half questioning, half commanding. Of Otto she had taken no notice whatever as yet; and this he felt to be strange, for her greetings to him of late had been very friendly—sometimes he had ventured to hope almost more than friendly. While speaking, she had been nervously fumbling in her pocket, and now abruptly broke off her phrase with, "I must have left my keys on the veranda. Baron Bodenbach,—no, not you, Mr Fadenhecht," as Herr Emanuel, who as yet had been able to do nothing beyond bowing and rubbing his hands, was about to make a polite rush—"you are to stay here. I am sure Baron Bodenbach will be so kind."

This said with increasing nervousness; and Otto noticed that she had grown very red, and was squeezing up little bread-pellets between her fingers. "You will find them in the big hammock, I think, or, if not, in Fícha's basket. Do go quick; for I want to make tea,"

she called after him, as Otto almost reluctantly left the room.

He was surprised and hurt by her manner and her evident wish to get rid of him. "What on earth has come over her, I wonder?" he reflected, bitterly. "She is quite changed since last night. Make tea, indeed! Pshaw!"

In order to get to the hammocks he had to pass the window, and in passing just caught a glimpse of Reata standing near Mr Fadenhecht, and talking to him with great earnestness, but evidently with lowered voice, for fear of being overheard. Even had it not been so, Otto was a gentleman, and could not have spied on her actions. So, turning his back upon them with a feeling of disgust, he strode off towards the end of the veranda. Mechanically he turned out the hammock and Fícha's basket, but found no keys. The window had to be repassed; and this time he kept his back towards it as much as possible, and resolutely looked away. But the sound of Reata's voice, which reached his ears, made his spirit fume within him.

"What can she have to say to that low cad? Something I am not to hear. I am sure I have no wish to do so. Sending me to look for keys, like a baby, just to keep me quiet! Why couldn't she speak out, and say that she had confidences to make to this fellow? Of course I can respect her secrets—haven't the slightest curiosity on the subject; wonder what it was, though."

He felt put out, snubbed, generally ill-used; and what added to his irritation was the inward consciousness that the process of "pumping" Herr Emanuel, from which he had hoped such great things, had turned out a most deplorable failure. In spite of his

unrestrained manner and seemingly random mode of conversation, that offensive but acute individual had managed to answer all Otto's questions, and to respond to all his suggestions, without letting him gain a single point of information.

Otto decided that he was far too furious to go back to breakfast; he would leave them plenty of time for their secrets, and smoke a cigar out here alone. He repeated "*alone*" several times to himself, as if enjoying the dismal sound of the word. By the time the cigar was lit the pangs of hunger began to assert themselves, and it is doubtful how long his resolution would have held out if he had not at that moment encountered aunt Olivia; and unable to explain satisfactorily the reason of his solitary grandeur, he accompanied her back into the house and the breakfast-room.

Reata and the attorney were in much the same positions as he had left them in—she pouring out coffee at the table, and he planted with his back towards the window, rubbing his hands with irrepressible glee.

"I wish he would rub the skin off them!" thought Otto, amiably, as he took his place at the table, and noticed with inward disquietude Reata's heightened colour.

"Your humble servant, Miss Bodenbach," said Mr Fadenhecht, advancing towards the old lady, speaking with disjointed slowness, and in a tone of most profound respect, which Otto at once set down as servile cringingness; "I hope I have the pleasure of seeing you in good health."

Not a word was said about the keys; Reata did not inquire, and evidently did not expect to get them: and Otto's temper was not improved when, after a moment, he discovered that they were sticking

in the tea-caddy, and must have been there safely before he went on his fruitless hunt.

His aunt's presence he felt to be a relief; and during the rest of breakfast he devoted his conversation, such as it was, chiefly to her.

Reata, on the contrary, having recovered her equanimity, showed an unusual amount of high spirits, and went on talking with almost feverish gaiety to Mr Fadenhecht, whose humour waxed more radiant every moment, while the friction of his hands grew proportionately more violent.

In spite of the icy answers, barely civil sometimes, which was all Otto vouchsafed to give, he carried on the conversation across the table with imperturbable blandness; and further, to Otto's infinite disgust, took to calling him "my dear Baron."

"Only fancy my having overslept myself to-day!" said Reata, when breakfast was nearly over. "Just to-day of all days!"

"Why just to-day?" Otto could not forbear inquiring.

She had caught herself up in her phrase, and now answered impatiently, "Never mind, it is nothing that need concern you. My oversleeping was on a grand scale too," she went on, quickly, "for it was past eight o'clock when I awoke."

"Yes, it was quite that," said Otto, eagerly. "I thought you must be ill when you had not appeared for two hours after your usual time; and Fícha seemed to think the same, for no supplications or arguments would induce her to abandon her guard in front of your window and come out walking with me."

"Ah, you don't know the Blossom's character, or you would not have wasted your eloquence in that way!"

"Two hours is a long time to

wait, my dear Baron, is it not?" remarked Mr Fadenhecht, insinuatingly.

"It depends what you are waiting for," was Otto's answer; and then in the next minute Mr Fadenhecht, after indulging in one more wink, and muttering, "Ah yes, what you are waiting for, just so," with an air of intense delight, got up, and declared himself at the ladies' service, mentioning at the same time that he would have to be off in an hour.

Otto left the room, saying something about not wishing to disturb them, but half expecting to be called back and invited to assist at the conference. No such summons came, however; and betaking himself to the room which served as sitting-room, he threw himself luxuriously on to an ottoman, and prepared to wile away the time by smoking. Having smoked for three minutes he began to find the time heavy, and stretching his hand towards the little bookcase beside him, he pulled out a book, bound in green leather—a worn, faded volume, which had once been handsome. 'Schiller's Balladen' was printed both on the cover and title-page. On the fly-leaf there was, besides, written in a well-known hand, "*To my dearest, beloved cousin Olivia, from her loving cousin Walter Bodenbach. June 1836.*"

Thirty-six years ago! There is something strange in seeing a handwriting so intimately familiar dated so far back, before we were born or thought of.

"Beloved—loving," mused Otto, inwardly; and somehow the idea of his old father's attachment did not seem to him half as absurd as it had done three weeks ago.

He skimmed through the pages: *Kampf mit dem Drachen, Taucher, Alpenjäger, Ritter Toggenburg*,—

here the page opened more easily, for there was a dried flower, a little sprig of lilac, keeping the place as book-mark, as old as the book, and without a particle of colour or scent remaining about it; only on the page opposite it had left a deep purplish-green stain, which rendered the first verse almost illegible, and penetrated through the next few leaves.

He had not read the ballad for years—not since he was a school-boy; and it seemed to him as if he were reading it for the first time, so different was the meaning it conveyed.

The opening of the breakfast-room door aroused his attention, and this sound was immediately followed by the departure of Mr Fadenhecht from the house. In the next second Reata entered the room, and began giving vent to her relief.

"Thank heaven, that odious man is gone!" she exclaimed, sitting down on a low stool near the window. "I usually lose my temper with him, but this time I think I managed pretty well."

"Yes, I think so," said Otto, with a shade of stiffness in his voice, at the same time flinging down the open volume of Schiller, face downwards, on the table beside him.

"What have you got hold of there?" she said, taking it up. "Schiller!" looking at him with an odd sparkle in her eyes. "Have you been admiring the illustrations? It is a very precious volume, you know."

"I suppose it is," he answered, not quite knowing in what sense this was meant.

"You must not fling it down in that way," went on Reata, with the air of admonishing a child; "the Ancient Giraffe dotes upon the book."

"So I should guess, from the inscription on the fly-leaf. I think I have heard of this book before. I fancy it was one of the things which my father sent messages about."

"Oh, I daresay," answered Reata, as she turned over the pages. "Your father gave you a great many messages for your aunt, did he not?"

"Yes, a good many."

"It has been a lifelong attachment, then?" asked Reata, turning over another page, "on his side?"

"On both sides, apparently," laughed Otto, lightly.

"Ah! you think so?" She looked up with that same odd sparkle in her eyes.

"I only judge from appearances."

"Appearances are very deceitful—very," and she shook her head mysteriously.

"What do you mean?" he asked, in utter bewilderment. "You have just been telling me that she dotes upon this book."

"Oh, I don't mean anything; I was only thinking how delusive our hopes sometimes are."

"For instance, those which my father has been cherishing?"

"For instance, those which your father has been cherishing."

"On the subject of my aunt's constancy?"

"On the subject of your aunt's constancy."

"Well, his delusion need not be disturbed. In the eyes of the world she has been constant, since she has remained single all her life."

Reata raised her head again quickly, and laughed. "Oh no, there is nothing to prevent him—let him remain deluded."

"You persist in talking of delusions?"

"I persist."

"But how can that be?"

"Don't ask any more questions; it is not a proper subject for discussion,"—she put her finger on her lips. "I have told you too much already."

"Then I suppose the evidence of that dried lilac is not to be trusted?"

"So that is what you call lilac," she said, putting down the book on her knee and examining the bleached flower. "I should like to see a fresh lilac growing."

"Would you? We have got lots of them at Steinbühl," and Otto thought how much he should enjoy showing them to her.

"What a stain this one has made! Look, it has gone right through and made the Ritter's beard purple! What a figure he looks!" she went on, holding up, for Otto's criticism, the representation of a distressingly meagre elderly hermit, sitting on a bench, the height of which had been considerably overcalculated, even for his lengthy lower limbs, for they hung down limply, terminating in a pair of ponderous extremities, very like the weights of a kitchen clock. His half-opened mouth seemed in immediate expectation of the so greatly-wanted nourishment, but in reality was meant to express admiration and rapturous attention in the movements of a plain-faced nun who was simpering at him from behind an iron grating.

"Did you ever see anything half as frightful?" Reata continued, rubbing the knight's face with her pocket-handkerchief. "Beards are things I have got no patience with."

"They are very harmless, surely,"—and Otto instinctively put up his hand, and stroked his beard of six weeks' growth. "Why should men not wear them if it happens to suit them?"

"Why *should* they wear them, rather?" she returned, indignantly. "Why should not women always go about with veils over their faces, if it suits them? A man can be anything under his beard; and anybody can be good-looking when planted-out in that manner. I am bound to confess, though, that even that has not saved the Ritter. You were reading the ballad, were you not? How far had you got?"

Otto said he had got to the passage where the Ritter is described as covering his noble limbs with hairy garments.

"I will finish it for you; may I? I am particularly fond of reading aloud:—

" 'Blickte nach dem Kloster drüben,
Blickte stundenlang
Nach dem Fenster seiner Lieben,
Bis das Fenster klang,
Bis die Liebliche sich zeigte,
Bis das theure Bild
Sich ins Thal herunter neigte,
Ruhig, engelmild.'

"There now!" Reata exclaimed, breaking off abruptly; "that is what always makes me angry."

"Angry at what?" asked Otto, in some astonishment.

"Why, at this way of going on, making eyes at a man for half a lifetime. Why could she not know her own mind from the beginning, and marry him instead of going into the convent?"

"But if she did not care for the man?" Otto ventured to suggest.

"Then she should have asked her lady-superioress to give her another room at the back of the convent, from which the Ritter could not have seen her. Fancy letting that scarecrow of a man goggle up at her window day after day! What a bad example for the younger nuns!"

Otto burst out laughing.

"You are rather hard on the poet, I think, Fräulein Reata; apparently he is not a favourite of yours."

Reata looked at him warningly.

"Please take care, Baron Bodenbach, or you will be asking me whether I like Schiller, in the same way you asked me whether I liked flowers; and I will have to give you the same answer. You might as well ask me whether I like you. Now you have said a great many stupid things, and some rather good ones. Some of Schiller's poems I cannot endure; while others I could read every day of my life, and never tire of. Look, here on the next page is one of my favourite ones, '*Der Handschuh*,'"—and Reata began reading in her clear vibrating voice.

She read this far differently, for she was reading *con amore*; it was with passion almost that she gave the last verse—

"Aber mit zärtlichem Liebesblick—
Er verheißt ihm sein nahes Glück—
Empfängt ihn Fräulein Kunigunde.
Und er wirft ihr den Handschuh ins Gesicht:
'Den Dank, Dame, begehrt ich nicht!'
Und verläßt sie zur selben Stunde."

"It is splendid!" said Otto, when she had done; "but in this instance you have decidedly more right to disapprove of the lady's conduct than you had in the last."

"But I do not disapprove of it," replied Reata, closing up the book with a bang, her cheeks still glowing with the excitement of reading; "I quite enter into her sentiments."

"You don't mean that seriously, do you?"

"I wish you would remember, Baron Bodenbach, that I always mean everything seriously. I do quite agree with Fräulein Kunigunde. How is an unfortunate

woman to know what a man's love is worth, unless she has tested it?"

"But she need not test it in such a violent manner. Supposing he had lost his life in the experiment, what, then, would have been her feelings?"

"Oh, in that case she would have bewailed him all her life, and deluged his grave with tears; at least not exactly *grave*, for I suppose the poor man would not have had one if he had been eaten up—but something equivalent. Surely that would have been reward enough for him."

"Rather a sorry sort of reward," remarked Otto, *sotto voce*; then aloud, "but surely you would not be as cruel as Kunigunde?"

"Why should you call it cruel? After all, she was risking her own happiness as much as his life. All tests are fair in love. Do you not think so?"

"Yes; all tests are fair in love," acquiesced Otto, a little dreamily, feeling at that moment ready to subscribe to any sentiments, however extravagant, as long as they fell from her lips; and as he watched her face, the thought

crossed his mind, that with her uncontrolled spirit and her strange bringing-up she was not a woman to be turned easily from her end, no matter what the means might be.

"Then I suppose you think the Knight Delorges an unmannered ruffian for throwing the glove in her face and leaving her?"

"No, not exactly that either," she said, reflectively. "I am not angry with him. It was not his fault if the trial was too great for his affection—but I pity him. Now I must go to the Giraffe"—she interrupted herself suddenly—"we have got letters to write, and I find that I am getting into a habit of wasting half my day in talking to you."

She passed him and left the room, and as her quick step went down the passage, he could still hear her declaiming to herself—

"Herr Ritter, ist eure Lieb' so heiss,
Wie ihr mir's schwört zu jeder Stund,
Ei, so hebt mir den Handschuh auf!"

"Yes, I think I could have fetched the glove for her," said Otto to himself.

SOME ASPECTS OF THE PRESENT FRENCH REPUBLIC.

LARGELY as the various recent Governments of France have been abused during their brief lifetimes, it has never been till after their decease that the true, full, thorough vastness of the hate provoked by each of them has been clearly demonstrated. The alluring but puzzling principle that "no man should be called happy till he dies," is manifestly inapplicable to them, for they have all passed through such a terribly bad time after death, that if any one of them was ever really "happy" at all, it could, clearly, have only been while it was still alive. Judging from this frequently renewed experience, we may fairly take it as probable that the actual Republic offers an infinitely less unattractive picture at this moment than it can possibly present after it has been destroyed. Consequently, as the duration of its existence is eminently uncertain, as it may, perhaps, like some of its predecessors, grow uglier with years, and as we may feel unhesitatingly confident that it will become absolutely hideous in the eyes of the French themselves directly it has a successor, there is every advantage in contemplating it while it still breathes, acts, and is. It has not yet had time to become much disfigured by age, excesses, or disease, and is probably as little ugly just now as it is ever likely to be; indeed, for anything we know to the contrary, this is perhaps the precise moment of its extremest loveliness, the exact instant at which it is looking its utmost best, at which it will be most courteous and most flattering to it to sketch its portrait. So as, for those reasons, we are sure we cannot be unjust to it in noting its features and expression now, let

us see what it looks like to us. We will be generous enough to give the front place to what can be said against it; the arguments in its favour—which we will carefully enumerate—will produce more effect if they are brought forward last.

Without counting the smaller indictments, four principal accusations are laid by a good many of the French at the door of their present Republic: they reproach it for its origin, for its Radical tendencies, for the persistent mediocrity of its representatives, for its want of external dignity. Let us look at these charges successively.

First, as to its birth—about which many nasty things have been said. It is true that there was a good deal of apparent irregularity around its cradle; it is true that the child saw the light in the gutter, in the midst of riot and violence, and that its father was never identified. But, after all, those facts supply no conclusive proof that its parents were not reputable persons, with an avowable position in the world. Its mother, at all events, was perfectly well known; she was one of those stern females whose rugged virtue crushes all imputation, the whisper of whose name suffices alone to silence scandal. Her resolute uncompromising morality bestowed unquestionable legitimacy on her offspring; she was exactly the sort of progenitor required for a Republic; she was—Necessity.

But though it is just to cordially acknowledge that the babe was born of what looks like an unimpeachable stock, it is not possible to deny that its early advantages all ended there, and that the other beginnings of its existence were singularly unsatisfactory. As soon as its rigid mother had

performed the dry duty of "recognising" it, according to French law, she seemed to immediately forget it. So, as the poor creature had no other relative—not even an aunt—it was left to run about the streets, with no schooling, no manners, and scarcely any clothes. It was indeed so utterly neglected, that it was positively not baptised till it was more than four years old! It never possessed a name that it could legally call its own during the entire period between its birth, on 4th September 1870, and its formal registration as a French citizen on 25th February 1875. It was, in fact, throughout that time an outcast, just as Moses, Romulus, and Cyrus had been in their childhood; and it had countless enemies who tried with all their might to murder it. It stuck to life, however, and at last its mother, having vainly sought to discover any other heir that she could set in its place, began to feel a call to behave maternally, for the moment at least, towards the young vagabond. So she picked it up out of the misery in which she had left it at its birth, washed it, put clean clothes upon it, made it as smart as her means allowed, had it christened, began its education, and did in a rough, half-unwilling fashion, what she could to give it a chance of making its way.

But though, at that date, the child became responsible and began to count in life,—though its character and its features grew into form, the change in its position did not immediately render its existence much more secure than it was before. The attempts to assassinate it were not abandoned; on the contrary, they became more resolute than ever: they culminated on the 16th May 1877 in the outburst of the most desperate conspiracy which our generation has witnessed. The plot failed, but its promoters suc-

ceeded in getting the young Republic into their hands for six months, and they pummelled it while they held its head under their arm with a ferocity which would, assuredly, have terminated the days of any less vigorously healthy victim. At last, on 30th January of the present year, it seemed to have really reached a temporary resting-place, for on that day the care of its interests was officially transferred to a guardian who was supposed to possess all the qualities required to successfully bring up a young Republic. Yet this was only another deception, for a fresh class of troubles then got in the way of the poor worried stripling; its own supporters began to squabble between themselves and to pile up their quarrels on the back of their already overloaded *protégé*. Its situation at that moment was defined by the phrase—"Les périls sont terminés, les difficultés commencent."

Yet, though it has never ceased to be exposed to trials, inside and outside, and though, at this moment, its "difficulties" seem to be increasing, the Republic was uncontestedly converted, by the Constitution of 25th February 1875, from a vagrant into a government. It has been, since that date, a thing, a reality, an *être moral*. The sin of its birth, if the sin had really existed, was condoned. But then it was, three years ago, that the Radicals began to talk a shade more loudly, to attract attention to themselves and their projects, and to rouse up the feeling that the Republic would fall some day into their hands, become their exclusive property, and grow into a danger for the land. This notion did not seem at first, however, to be justified by events. It is only this year that the action of the Radicals has given a serious confirmation to it.

In 1875 the young Republic behaved delightfully; it kept its more dangerous acquaintances at a distance; it rid itself of many of its precious practices; it shook off the *nostalgie de la boue*, and became, if not a graceful member of the family of governments, at all events a rough and ready sort of holder of the situation to which, in the absence of competitors, it had been forcedly promoted. The world recognised that, with the singular capacity of adaptation which is special to the French, the new institution did, for a time at least, present a reassuring aspect; that it took its place, without much awkwardness or timidity, amongst its fellows; that it pleasantly invited the rest of the earth to come to see it at the Champ de Mars; that, later on, it occupied an arm-chair at Berlin, calmly, as if it had never played at pitch and toss in the mud—as if it had never done anything else in its life but sit majestically at congresses; that it certainly made friends, and that—as certainly—it discouraged enemies. It acted in all this with undeniable cleverness, and it attained a more rapid and a more real success—so far as appearances were concerned—than is usually achieved by a *parvenu*.

The new-comer ceased, therefore, to be a simple adventurer. It was no longer a casual product of a passing need; it got into the groove of life; it grew into an acknowledged force; and—especially, particularly, and above all—it asserted itself, in its young vigour, as the freshest thing in governments, as the sole remedy (so far as political therapeutics have yet been carried) for the social maladies of our time. The more earnest of its supporters implored us to regard it as a salutary, lenitive, depuratory elixir; they assured us, with an intensity

of earnestness which made them almost look as if they really believed what they said, that we had before us at last the means of solving, to everybody's satisfaction (notably to their own), all the class problems that worry statesmen; and that if only, in each country, the people could acquire and exercise the right of governing itself, without interference from monarchs or upper strata, the earth would immediately become a happy fold, in which all enmities would disappear, in which the lion would lie down with the lamb, in which all would be delight and tenderness—because the sovereign people would be content. These picturesque colourings bestowed upon the French Republic a particular character, and excited in beholders an interest and a curiosity which the operations of older and more familiar undertakings no longer provoked. The world would, indeed, have had cause to thank the Republic if it could have brought about a state in which the jaguar of democracy would whisper sweet nothings to the antelope of aristocracy,—in which the rabbit of labour would toy gleefully with the boa-constrictor of capital,—in which the little negro of poverty would seek sweet slumber in the embrace of the shark of property. If only we Europeans could have felt sure that all these beautiful spectacles would be a necessary consequence of a universal application of the Republic, if only we had been quite certain that we should contemplate them in all their loveliness as soon as “the United States of Europe” had been set up, it is probable that most of us would have immediately petitioned our respective Parliaments for a modification of the local Constitution. It is true that, so far as actual information goes, there would always remain one exception in this

charming brotherhood of foes ; it is presumable that even the Republic would be unable to induce the pert sparrow of free-thought to nestle between the claws of the vulture of Vaticanism, and that, all-healing and all-propitiating as democracy is said to be, its adherents would continue all the same to indignantly exclaim, "*Le cléricalisme, voilà l'ennemi !*" But, even with this restriction, the sketch of the potentialities of the Republic was so pretty to look at that it really was a lamentable pity that other people were unable to recognise in it a correct portrait. It did present, it is true, a vague, faint resemblance to certain points and features of the position in which the young Republic had placed itself, and it is honest to avow and proclaim that the picture was not exclusively composed of pure imagination. It did seem to be a fact, judging from the experience obtained, that the French were quieter under this Republic than they had been under any of their preceding forms of government. It did seem to be a fact that Socialism had almost disappeared, so far, at least, as any public advocacy of it was concerned. It did seem to be a fact that, generally, the disturbing classes were less inclined to disturb, and that the satisfaction which had been given to the democratic party by the suppression of Monarchy had materially diminished the tendency of that party to get up revolutions. So far, and within those clearly-defined limits, the Republic had manifestly acted as a soother, and everybody might admit without hesitation that the democrats (who had gained by it) were justified in depicting it as an admirable institution in which—so long as they did not quarrel too violently between themselves—they had found an unwonted peace and

a satisfaction of the earlier portion of their longings. But at that point resemblance stopped and invention began—all because of the Radicals.

It can scarcely be denied that that there are in France some persons who are not Radicals, who have indeed a considerable horror of Radicals, and to whom the notion of lying down with them as a united, happy family has always been particularly repulsive. These persons have not profited (as the Radicals have done already, and evidently hope to do much more) by the establishment of the Republic. They have endured it, more or less impatiently, because, for the moment, they cannot get away from it ; but there is no present probability that they are likely to regard it as the universal curer. They say that the democratic picture exhibits it in a fancy dress which neither belongs to it nor fits it ; that it is not a doctor, but a quack ; and that, even if it were a doctor, they would not follow its prescriptions. To them the Republic is not, as M. Thiers called it, "*Le gouvernement qui nous divise le moins,*" it is simply a momentarily inevitable evil from which they long to escape. To the eyes of the Radicals, on the contrary, it possesses all the virtues. They speak of it as Plato did of Love, as "the wonder of the wise, the amazement of the gods ; desired by those who have no part in it, and precious to those who have the better part in it." And it is precisely because they have "the better part in it" that they invite the world to share it with them—on condition of continuing to do as they like in it.

Now the world, taken generally, has not yet seemed disposed to accept the invitation. It has said that Republics, like many other things, are dependent for their value on

the point of view from which they are contemplated; and that their worth is not, as the Radicals beg us to believe, inherent, inborn, and intrinsic, but is merely relative and subjective. So the world, exercising its judgment, has hesitated to attach too high a price to the Republic, because it has mistrusted its tendencies, and has had scant confidence in its future. The world imagines, especially since last February, that this French sample of a Republic is not independent, that Radicalism is seizing hold of it as a tool, and that, instead of preserving its original attitude of neutrality amongst all parties, it is becoming the slave of one single party, and that one the most dangerous of all. Of course this view may be erroneous; of course events may prove that Radicals are the most magnanimous and the most generous of men, that they have never cast one passing glance towards the thought of using the Republic for themselves alone, and that their absorbing longing is to share it self-denyingly with all the rest of the nation. But, erroneous or not, the view is largely held; and though it is altogether manifest that, as M. Littré says, "the Republic has at its disposal two forms of action—Opportunism or Radicalism," it would be difficult to efface the prevalent impression that in the latter, not in the former, lies the inevitable procedure of the future. Of course it is not impossible that the Republic may march on carefully, warily, slowly; awaiting events—not anticipating them; evading difficulties—not inflaming them; profiting by occasions—not provoking them; conciliating antagonisms—not stimulating them; striving to belie its ugly reputation—not confirming that reputation by conduct which would render it more ugly still. But it is equally possible that

it may dash straight at its utmost ends, with its fingers clutched, its arms outstretched, and a howl on its lips, regardless of peace, policy, or prudence, and animated only by the lust of instant possession. Of course it is possible that the Republic may remain the *République Conservatrice* of M. Thiers, but it is equally possible that it may become the *République Sociale et Démocratique* of the Intransigeants. And most people expect that it will be the latter.

And, honestly, most people have some reason for the fear. If this Republic is an object of suspicion and doubt, if it has to fight its way against scepticism and prejudice, whose fault is that? It is not suspected simply because it is a Republic, for there are in the world republics which are esteemed and trusted. It is suspected for motives which are special, not general. The antecedents of the French branch of its family, and its own recent conduct, have been the main sources of the mistrust which surrounds it. Its partisans know this so well that they never attempt to protect themselves by any vindication of principles; they carefully limit their defence to protestations that they in no way intend to imitate the faults and the crimes of their predecessors—to perpetually renewed assertions that the accusations which are advanced against their present attitude are unfounded and unfair, and to reiterated declarations that Radicalism is the very last thought in their heads. Yet nobody believes them.

If the Republican party were suddenly to become composed exclusively of ordinary Republicans—that is to say, if all its members were to turn moderate in the measures which they propose; if the party contained no Radicals at all,—ah, then, we should see an instant

change in the opinion of the world. But it is not to be expected that Radicals will render to the Republic the immense service of abandoning it; never will they become Imperialists or Legitimists; their sole chance of power is to keep out emperors and kings. So they take the Republic under their particular protection, and damage it accordingly. Abstractedly, there is no reason whatever why a Republic without Radicals should not be a very excellent form of government—for those who like it; it is the Radical connection alone which bespatters and begrimes it. This fact seems self-evident, yet the Radicals do not perceive it; so blind, indeed, are they to it that they evidently consider they are bestowing additional beauty on the Republic by their fashion of dressing it. Down to the end of last year they were relatively quiet; it is since January, since the senatorial elections and the nomination of the new President of the Republic, that they have come blusteringly to the front. They have proclaimed since then that because France has shown herself, for the moment, to be unmistakably Republican, the time has therefore come for the adoption of Radical measures. For them Republicanism and Radicalism ought to be synonymous, and they have gone to work with a rush to prove that they really have become so. They have carried an amnesty for the Commune; they are proposing the suppression of the greater part of the schools kept by the religious orders; they are talking of suspending the irremovability of the judges. Some of them are suggesting that all public functionaries whatever, including cabmen, stockbrokers, judges, officers of the army and navy, policemen, prefects, and professors, shall be chosen by election, and shall only remain in office so long as universal suffrage may please

to leave them there. A good many of them call urgently for the suppression of jails, standing armies, marriages, titles, and priests.

Now schemes of this sort frighten fathers of families, and incline mothers to shrink rather nervously from the people who advocate them. So the Radicals, afflicted at being shrunk from, and seeking hungrily for unsuspecting friends and voters, assert of course that if ever innocence was persecuted theirs is, and implore the population to regard them merely as cautious and most trustworthy Liberals with nothing subversive about them. But somehow, in spite of their protestations, they do not manage to inspire confidence; and since they laid hold of the young Republic, such good repute as was beginning to grow up around it, is sensibly diminishing. Of course this is rather hard on the Republic; but it will not get much sympathy in its sorrows. It will simply be told to keep better company, if it can—or else to take the consequences.

The strange mediocrity of the representatives of the Republic comes next in the list of the reproaches addressed to it. With the exception of Gambetta, not one single man of real political capacity has brought himself to the front since 1870. An institution which professes to appeal to all the talents—which declares not only that it excludes nobody from its ranks, but which entreats the whole thirty-six millions of French people to rush into them—has discovered just one recruit of ability. Some of its public men are violent and some are quiet; some of them are laborious and some are indolent; some of them are ambitious and some are indifferent; most of them are respectable; but not one of them—excepting Gambetta—is a statesman. Never was there a more tempting opportunity, yet there is

no one to profit by it; never was there a surer chance of place and fame, yet no one seizes it. Gambetta is the holder of an unassailed monopoly. And the situation is getting worse rather than better; the candidates for office seem to be growing less and less able in proportion as they become more and more numerous. So evident is this, that when, last February, M. Lepère was made Minister of the Interior in the place of M. de Marcère, one of the most influential members of the Left observed, with a sigh, "*Nous descendons l'échelle des médiocrités; Lepère est un sous-de Marcère, et de Marcère était déjà un sous-Ministre de l'Intérieur.*" Of course they all have the best intentions; of course they are all excellent husbands and fathers: but their very goodness is an additional weakness, for it indisposes them to turn resolutely against their Radical colleagues, who, though only a minority, are now struggling to take the lead amongst them.

Now, what is the reason of this mediocrity? How is it that Gambetta stands out alone, above and beyond the crowd, as single in his force as a ship is single on the sea, so strong and vast in comparison with all his neighbours that they look like flies on the flanks of an elephant? Why is this Republic so utterly poor in men that it cannot even be suspected of possessing unrewarded talents, that it cannot even be said of any one of its agents, as it was of Monseigneur Dupanloup, that he is "*un de ces passants remarquables qui n'arrivent pas?*" The Republic has plenty of members "*qui n'arrivent pas,*" but why does it not produce even some "*passants remarquables?*"

The answers to these questions are not difficult to find, and they are all of the same kind. Nature

proceeds in everything by compensation. Great men, like rain, insurance risks, or crops, are mere matters of average. When the supply of genius has been excessive for a while, it stops; nature takes a rest, as a calm comes after a storm. France is now passing through a period of general repose in intellectual productivity. It is not only in politics that she is childless; she has, at this present time, neither a great soldier, nor a great artist, nor a great writer, nor a great thinker. Just as Prussia is in an epoch of puissant generativeness, so is France enduring a term of impotence. It is not the Republic which has paralysed her procreation of real men; the sterility which now weighs upon her was perceptible before 1870, before 1848, and almost before 1830. It is a reaction from the superb fertility of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic times; it is the exhaustion consequent upon over-fecundity; it is the halt of nature after an effort. France stood high in men some eighty years ago; she stands low now. The present Republic is not responsible for that; but it suffers vastly by it, and is told with scorn, every day, that the one outcome of its brain is—Gambetta.

Now Gambetta is, undeniably, a great man; great in himself, but great especially because he has no rivals. It is true also that he is not a Radical—now. It is true that he proclaims himself to be an "Opportunist;" that, compared with a Radical, an "Opportunist" is a sort of Conservative; and that, consequently, he may be regarded as representing the double force of intellect and of prudence combined. Yet, great as he is, he can scarcely be considered as sufficing, in his person alone, to constitute the whole associated capacity of a party which claims to govern

France. The Republic, in his hands, is "a one-horse concern"—he is first, and the rest nowhere. And though that may be a very satisfactory position for Gambetta, it is certain that neither the Republic nor the country is gaining by it. However, there is no present prospect of any change in it; no coming man is visible; even the "young man from the country," who has occasionally aroused illusory hopes in England, is undiscoverable in France. The Republic has to get on with what she has—she must choose between nothingness and Gambetta. Under such conditions, it is not improbable that the dictatorship of Tours will some day be re-established in Paris. But, whatever be the result, the cause remains: the Republic has no men. All the worse for the Republic.

Finally, the Republic has to contend against its own insufficiency of dignity in bearing, in manners, in ceremonial. "Spartan simplicity" does not fit in at all, either with life in Paris, or with the habits of the French, or with their notions of a strong government. And when "Spartan simplicity" is accompanied by a good deal of roughness and ugliness, it becomes still less suited to its place. To assert that the Republic is prospectively dangerous, is not more damaging to it in certain French eyes, than to say that it is immediately vulgar; and vulgar it unfortunately is in many of its smaller doings. A functionary who cleans his nails with a penknife in public may possibly be an ardent patriot and an able servant of his country, but his ways bestow no grandeur on his office. And there is more in the matter than accidental nails and penknives; there is incontestably, under this Republic, a rather general absence of some of the personal forms and usages to which educated Europe is accustomed. The Repub-

lic is not fortunate in possessing so many adherents who roar and roll about as if they were buffaloes or bulls of Bashan. The rapid substitution of the *nouvelles couches* for the former "governing classes" is in no way adding to the external charm of the French commonwealth; and however little importance certain Republicans may be disposed to attach to grace, to good taste, and to mere details of behaviour, of demeanour, and of refinement, it is not possible to deny that the stateliness, the majesty, and the lustre of a government, and of the institutions which it represents, are in some degree dependent precisely on those very details. Democracy may become altogether fascinating in time, but it is not so yet; we are still beholding it in an unpolished phase. And, honestly as we may struggle against our own prejudices, generously as we may make allowances for the uncultured and the untrained, we cannot help observing the fact that this Republic is sometimes somewhat uncouth and rude, and that the accusations made against it, in that sense, by its French opponents, are thoroughly well founded. The Republic may imagine, perhaps, that it does not suffer any political injury from this cause; but foreign lookers-on can see that its exterior dignity is impaired by it, both at home and abroad, and that a little more pomp at the Elysée, and a little less roughness at Versailles, would assist the Government to obtain a *prestige* which it has never yet won, and which the French, above all people in the world, will never forgive their Government for not acquiring.

And that is about all that can be seriously urged against the Republic. It has been thrust down the throats of the people whether they liked it or not. It seems to be drifting into the hands of destructive Radicals.

It cannot show two men of talent. It is abundantly bad-mannered. Well, after all, worse charges than these have been poured out against other Governments that France has had, and in balance with them must be set forth the considerations that are advanced by the other side. Let us now turn our ears that way and listen to what is said in support of the Republic.

At the general election of October 1877, about three-fifths of the suffrages polled were in favour of the Republican candidates; and when, three months ago, the partial renewal of the Senate was effected, about five-sixths of the electors voted in the same direction. The country has consequently expressed, in its two most recent manifestations of opinion, a distinct wish to retain the Republic. Here lies the first and the strongest argument in its favour. It is able to declare with truth, that, for the moment, the majority of French people want it, are content with it, and desire nothing but it. That a large minority of the same people do not want it, are not content with it, and do desire something else, is a detail of no value in its eyes, the function of minorities being to support the will of others, particularly in Republics, as we see gloriously demonstrated in the United States. And really, in cases where a nation is divided against itself as to the choice of a form of government, it is difficult to see how any government whatever can be maintained unless the majority is to have its own way about it. Besides, in France just now, the minority is not only a minority, but is—to weaken it still further towards the majority—made up of the advocates of three conflicting opinions. So the Republic is justified in asserting, not only that the greater part of the population is with it, but also that the lesser part, which is against it, is

itself divided into elements each one of which is as hostile to the others as it is to the Republic. Now this is undeniably a strong position; and as long as it lasts, the Republic has the best of all good rights to declare that it is a more national government than any other that can be set up in opposition to it, and that it faithfully represents the larger portion of the popular will.

An argument such as this needs no development; it is conclusive as it stands. Even if the Republic were the worst of Governments, even if the dangers which it may possibly entail were graver than they yet look to be in the present case, all that would not suffice to authorise foreign spectators to call for its suppression so long as the French themselves—who, when they have had enough of it, can upset it by their own votes—continue to support it. If they choose to retain it we have no right to object.

But still there is, all the same, something more to be said. It cannot be denied that the present preference for it is based on something more than a careless unreasoning acceptance of what is, simply because it is; on something more than a mere shrinking from change, because change may do more harm than good; or something more than a recognition of the beggarly helplessness, just now, of all chances of anything else. It stands, more solidly, on an evident conviction that, with the past experience and under the present circumstances of the country, the Republic is, after all, and in most ways, more advantageous to it than any form of monarchy would be. The majority of the nation really want the Republic—for the moment, not only because there is, practically, nothing else for them to take, but also because, by the force of events, they have become convinced that they positively gain by the adoption of a Republic.

How they gain is a separate matter; we shall see that next. That they really believe they gain is beyond doubt; they are maintaining the Republic because they think it does them good.

We get on, next, to the causes of this belief. And here we may leave aside the notion that Republican institutions are the only ones worthy of free men. We may put out of the account all the swagger about the dignity of self-government, and all the twaddle about "immortal principles." We can well afford to exclude big talk of this sort, because we recognise the existence of a solid material proof that the Republic has done good. It has brought more quiet into France than was discoverable there under any anterior *régime*. And in that single fact lies a grander and a more unanswerable testimony in its favour than all the theories and all the dreams of '89, piled up together, could anyhow supply. A passing allusion has been already made to this element of the question, but now we have got it in its proper place and can give to it the attention which it merits.

On the appearance of the Republic in 1870, the Radicals all over France felt like Sindbad when he had shaken the old man off his shoulders. After being oppressed by a master for eighteen years, they suddenly found themselves without any master at all. And this inrushing freedom burst upon them at a moment of intense political excitement, in the midst of war and of passionate emotions. The Commune of Paris and the disorders of Lyons and Marseilles were the outcome of this situation. They came and went; and with them ended rioting. The Monarchists endeavoured afterwards to upset the Republic, but its own supporters have ceased entirely, since 1871, to try to revolutionise it. The conse-

quence is, that as the Republicans, and the Republicans alone, kept up political agitation in France in former times—as they used to be the exclusive promoters of *émeutes* and barricades—as they have now obtained their ends and have nothing more to win by force, it follows, naturally enough, that (unless the Conservatives take to street fighting) we are not likely to see any more insurrections in France, so long as the Republic lasts. Even the most advanced of the Radicals have no motive just now for resorting to arms. They proclaim, indeed, that their present objects are to act by public opinion and not by cartridges—to get the country with them by degrees, and then to "legalise Radicalism by legislation"—to carry their measures by votes, and not by battle. Whether they will go back again to guns hereafter when they have found out that public opinion is not to be gained over by their blandishments, remains to be seen. All that we can consider to-day is the condition of to-day; and it is a condition of deeper public tranquillity than France has known for a century. It can no longer be pretended that "if France is content Europe is calm;" but it is manifestly more true than ever that when French Republicans are content France is calm. They alone constitute an eruptive force; but now that all the vents are open before them, they have nothing to explode.

The minority, of course, is anything but calm; it subsists in a state of permanent indignation. But what does that matter? The minority is the most divided, the least intelligent, the most helpless, of parties. It is so resolutely foolish, so wilfully powerless, that nobody outside its own ranks particularly cares whether it is content or not. How is it possible to keep up interest in the fate of so-called

Conservatives, who lie down and shriek and let themselves be trampled on? There is not now in the whole world a political spectacle more saddening than that which is offered by the non-Republican groups in France. Those who live amongst them—those who listen to the unproductive bitterness of their daily talk, and watch the unfruitful indolence of their daily occupations—can alone measure either the intensity of their rage or the utterness of their abdication. They have given up all pretence of combat, and are looking on at the Republic with spiteful inertness, just as the unoccupied soldier with his hands in his pockets looks on at the Prussians in the picture of the *Dernière Cartouche*. If ever people deserved their fate these French Conservatives do; for, though they howl at it, they sit down under it and bear it, without making an effort to change it. Of course their situation is difficult; but it is in no way hopeless. Some day their turn will come again: meanwhile they are not making the slightest attempt to hurry it on. The varied and energetic forms of action which the English so unceasingly employ in order to maintain their local influence and position are all unknown to them. They call the others *canaille* all day long, and then go to dinner with the sweet conviction that by doing so they have performed their entire duty to God and man, and that there is absolutely nothing more for them to attempt. Their chiefs did try, it is true, the mad adventure of the 16th May; but even then the Conservative masses did not rush out of their apathy and grapple; that impotent absurdity only proved once more how unfit the French Conservatives have become either to think or to act.

So the majority has everything its own way, and can fairly claim to

be doing good to France by the internal peace which it has produced. It is true that it is itself split up into groups, but the divergences between those groups are not yet marked enough to weaken the general cohesion or the general calm. In numbers, in reason, in vigour, in the results they have induced, the Republicans are the masters; their assertion that they have quieted France is founded on those four floors; and their force rests not only on the power of their own party, but also on the weakness of their adversaries. The tranquillity which they have engendered is a product of the same two causes.

Furthermore, this improvement in the general position of the country is not limited to the interior. France has also gained largely abroad in strength, in influence, in honour; and from that fact springs the third argument invoked by the Republicans in favour of the Republic. During the last eight years the foreign relations of France have traversed three distinct epochs—under the successive direction of Thiers, Decazes, and Waddington. The first epoch was passed in getting rid of Germany; the second in preventing Germany from coming back; it has only been during the third period that France has been free enough to hold her head up. M. Thiers was “the liberator of the territory;” circumstances prevented him from being anything else or more. When the Duke Decazes took the *Affaires Etrangères*, the Germans were all gone; the question was no longer how to turn them out, but how to keep them from returning. For this task the Duke possessed the rarest qualifications; his suppleness, his inventivity, his faculty of resource, are altogether special to himself; no other living diplomatist can be compared to him in the property of twisting out of a difficulty. Even his enemies (and he has made

more of them than most men are able to create) admit that his mind is fertile and adroit. The services which he rendered will, in all probability, never be rightly known, for the story of the perpetually-renewed difficulties between Berlin and Paris with which he had to deal, is not likely to be told either by himself or by anybody else; but the few who are acquainted with the truth will always proclaim that the Duke Decazes, by sheer dexterity, saved France ten times over from the bitterest humiliations. He acted throughout his four years of office with combined prudence and address; he kept his country out of messes with the rarest success. But he did absolutely nothing to lift her up in the world. He left her in November 1877 exactly where he found her in October 1873—low down amongst her neighbours. Then appeared M. Waddington, and with him came what the French call a *changement à vue*. France rose instantly; Germany smiled graciously at her; England became as civil to her as she ever is to anybody (which is not saying much); all the world grew suddenly polite to her. Why? Simply because M. Waddington, speaking in the name of the consolidated Republic, inaugurated a policy of simplicity. He had none of the cleverness of his predecessor, and he possessed no diplomatic training, but he brought with him to the Quai d'Orsay a personal reputation of honesty and straightforwardness which instantly gained confidence for him throughout Europe. The Duke Decazes had vainly struggled to bring about an alliance between France and Russia, and had thereby sorely offended Germany. M. Waddington, on the contrary, turned his back on Russia and held out his hand to England, the one Power with which France can permit herself to coquet without arousing irritation at Berlin.

He did more; he said to his friends, "If I do not represent an alliance with England, I represent nothing." The fruits of this new attitude ripened so fast, that the Republic has already begun to eat them with pride and appetite. M. Waddington has set before it a repast of which it had not seen the like before, so it is of course recompensing him by scheming to turn him out.

Gratitude, however, has nothing to do with the facts of the case. The Republic is at this moment partially trusted and temporarily believed in by Europe; and as that is a situation in which the Empire never once found itself during its eighteen years of existence, the Republicans have a fair right to argue that their Government is now better liked in Europe than the Empire ever was. And they go further still. Not only do they assert that the Republic has positively attained this most unexpected position, but they add, with a confidence in themselves which other people may perhaps regard as slightly exaggerated, that the Republic will necessarily remain in that position. They say this because they imagine they have just discovered a new system of medication for their dealings with other countries. They are so struck by what seems to be at this instant the result of the union of honesty and Republicanism, that they are applying it with the tingling eagerness of inventors. They are appointing honest Republicans as ambassadors all over Europe; they are writing Republican articles in praise of honesty; they are making speeches to prove that honesty and Republicanism are synonymous. And all this because Waddington the Honest has reigned for a while at the Quai d'Orsay! As he is the first Englishman who has been a Minister in France, we may perhaps be allowed to feel pleased at the sight.

This is not quite all, however. There is something more than a mere sudden love of truth and sincerity in the recent protestations of the French Republicans, that they have laid their hands on a success and are going to stick to it. There is a policy behind it,—a policy which the one real man in France — Gambetta — approves, supports, and will set to work when his own turn comes to rule. That policy is warm friendship towards England, courteous cordiality towards Germany, liberal tariffs, and resolute opposition to the Roman Curia. Those four conditions sum up the principles of action outside France, which the future Dictator, M. Gambetta, will apply (unless he alters his mind); and—with the exception of the last one—they are wise enough, and practical enough, to justify the hope of the Republicans that, so long as they maintain them, they will preserve agreeable relations with their neighbours. But the fourth condition is a product of passion, not of policy. The establishment of the *Kulturkampf* in France would inevitably alienate from the Republic a large number of the moderate Republicans. In the savageness of their hate against Clericalism the Gambettists are forgetting that the majority of French electors are, at the bottom of their hearts, Catholics. They may be indifferent to Catholic forms, they may be irritated against priests; but they will never consent to any interference with freedom of worship. The elections would change their present colour, and would become Conservative, if any future Minister should commit the folly which is implied in the fourth article of the programme of foreign policy which is attributed to M. Gambetta.

But that folly would produce its effects in France itself; the position of the Republic abroad would not

be affected by it. Consequently, as regards relations with other Governments, the promised programme may be considered as offering fair promise of duration for the position into which France has now climbed, and as justifying the prophecies which are based upon it. But will it be maintained unchanged? Can anything be maintained unchanged in France?

Lastly, the friends of the Republic assert that it has shed over France a liberty which has hitherto been unknown there, and which would be unattainable under any other form of government. They pretend that it alone can establish freedom, because it alone has no object in suppressing it. Now we have not urged any strong objections to the various merits which we have thus far set forth as claimed by the Republicans — on the contrary, we have recognised their general truth and value; but, this time, there are protests to be made. That the Republic should profess to hold a monopoly of some particular virtue is natural enough, for each of the various Governments which preceded it did exactly the same. The First Empire bragged of its glory, the Restoration of its dignity, Orleanism of its constitutionality, and the Second Empire of its prosperity. So this present arrangement vaunts its liberty. But liberty is a result more difficult to realise than either prosperity, or constitutionality, or dignity, or glory; it is indeed, of all political conditions, the least easy to attain. It has, however, the seductive quality of allowing itself to be talked about with delightful facility. Regarded as a subject for speech-making, as a text for proclamations, as a basis for programmes and platforms, it offers all the enticements, all the flexibilities, and all the capabilities; it is only when it has to be set into the shape of an applied fact that its

inherent intricacy comes out. Forgetting the almost insurmountable obstacles which attend its fulfilment, lured on by its superb name, and by the temptation which that name offers to all popular Governments, the Republicans took it up as if they had invented it, and, of course, destroyed it the moment they pretended to apply it. Their conception of liberty is a very old one; there is absolutely nothing new about it. The formula, "I permit you to do what I like," was not first imagined by them, but it is being rather vigorously worked out by them, and that is why they are not perhaps quite accurate in proclaiming that they have bestowed on France true freedom.

Like most other masters, the Republic imposes its own will; and the moment anybody enforces a will, somebody else must give in to that will. Here again, however, we have a very old notion before us: it was long ago found out that the greatest possible liberty is only a diminution of slavery; but still, if the Republic imposed its will equally upon all Frenchmen, the diminution of slavery, which it would call liberty, would be a verity as between each citizen and the Government. It is because that will is being enforced unequally on the people—because some of them are being treated more harshly than others—that the pretension of the Republic to be a distributor of liberty is a sham and a deceit. Paley has said somewhere that "doing what we like is natural liberty; and doing it within limits which prevent it from causing any damage to others is civil liberty." Now this Republic (like a good many other Governments) does not hesitate at damage; it proclaims that certain of its subjects—the active Catholics—ought to be made to suffer in their civil rights, because they are supposed to be its

enemies. With this object its supporters have been suggesting more or less seriously for some time past that a variety of offensive measures should be adopted against these Catholics; and at last the Government itself has come forward with the proposal that the members of most of the religious orders, whose special function is to teach, shall be prohibited from teaching. Now the persons affected by this proposal are French citizens, and, whatever be the objections to their opinions or their views—whatever be the dislike provoked by their persons or their ways,—they are entitled, if there be any liberty at all, to precisely the same rights and faculties as any one else in the land. But the Republicans say that these men shall no longer possess these rights; they intend, if they can, to take away from them the faculty of keeping schools, which is accorded to everybody else. The noble principle that "liberty is the power of doing anything which does not prevent others from being free" is not applied by them; on the contrary, their notion of liberty is, that the majority has the right to prevent certain members of the minority from being free. They imitate the Empire by attacking the liberty of their adversaries,—they refuse to employ toleration to protect the intolerant; they reject it as "the sole known remedy for diversity of opinion;" they forget that, as Napoleon said, "fanaticism is always produced by persecution;" and they persecute. But yet they coolly assure us that they have instituted liberty in France.

To answer all this by the argument that one swallow does not make summer, that one example of persecution does not lift up persecution to the height of an adopted principle of action, is to make no answer whatever. People who pro-

fess to have introduced liberty into their country have no right to persecute at all; if they do so even once—once only—they forfeit all right to talk of liberty. The form and the objects of the persecution lie outside the question; to-day priests and monks are the victims; to-morrow it may be generals and stay-makers; the day after to-morrow it may be wet-nurses and bankers: all that has nothing to do with the unvarying truth that civil liberty does not and cannot exist unless it is equal for all, and that the creation of one single exception in its application destroys the entire fabric. Just as religion consists in resignation, so does liberty consist in equality; the slightest difference in its application puts an end to it. When, therefore, the Republicans imagine that, while they chuckle about liberty, they can simultaneously bestow it on their friends and withdraw it from their foes, they perpetrate one of those grotesque lies which sometimes render an otherwise good cause both ridiculous and false. So far from being a merit of the Republic, this pretended exercise of liberty is a stumbling-block in its road, for the shouting about it only serves to attract attention to the fact that true liberty is just as absent under the present Government as it was under the Empire. Even if the proposed measures are not voted by the Chambers, that result will not affect the question. The Cabinet has officially asked the Parliament to enact laws of exception and prescription; and, whatever be the fate of the proposal, the phenomenon will remain that such laws were considered to be legitimate under a Republic by a Ministry which represents the relatively moderate elements of its party. For these reasons liberty must be struck out of the list of the advantages offered to France by its actual *régime*.

And there are no other advantages to be computed. There ends the catalogue. But, before we try to strike a balance between the two sides of the evidence, and to see which way the scales incline, there is one other element of the question at which it is essential to cast a glance. That element does not yet form a recognised part of the considerations put forward by the French themselves for or against their Republic, but a good many of them are beginning to feel anxiously over it, and it is particularly striking to such foreigners as happen to look closely at the present condition of France. Indeed it is natural that foreigners should observe it, for the moment, more attentively than the French do, for the reason that it is social, not political; and that in times of excitement the inhabitants of a country are usually so absorbed by the noisy public accidents which are occurring every day, that they have no time to think of any comparatively unapparent movements which may be at work more or less silently around them. Foreigners, on the other hand, are naturally somewhat indifferent to political agitations which have no direct action upon their own lives, and incline to turn their watchfulness towards questions which have something in common with the thoughts that interest them at home, towards class influences and social forces, towards the nature of the relationship between the various strata of the nation, towards all that constitutes the internal life of a country. And when foreigners do look in these directions, they see more clearly perhaps than the French themselves, how grave the situation of the upper classes has become. The Republic has wrought a change so great in their position and their prospects that no other consequence yet produced by the new Government can be compared

with it. The *nouvelles couches* have dashed to the front, and have not only seized rights and power and station, but, in addition, have positively suppressed society. In the sudden destruction of all social domination lies the remaining element of the case which we have still to look at.

During the last eight years the upper classes of France have progressively and unceasingly lost place—not only political place, but social place as well. Partly by their own abdication, partly by the indifference of the nation, partly by the thrusting of the new candidates for authority, their situation has been rapidly sapped, and is now demolished. And this result has been brought about since 1871. It is true that one section of society—that one which includes the Legitimist families—had withdrawn after 1830 from contact with either the Court, or the official world, or the public life of the country: but that section was a small one; it was limited in all its aspects—in numbers, in credit, in strength. What is happening now presents another character, for the actual movement is not circumscribed, it is general; it does not touch one opinion alone, it affects almost the whole of that portion of the population which is generically described by the denomination of “society.” The Republic and “society” have turned their backs on each other with mutual suspicion and contempt. So far they have both behaved alike; but there, alas! ends all resemblance between the forms of action which they adopt. The Republic is trying energetically to show France by every means at its disposal that it can do without the classes which compose society; that those classes are of no use to it; that they are unproductive and untrustworthy; and that the best thing the nation can do is to forget their

presence, and to march on as if they did not exist. Society, on the contrary, is, as was said just now, sitting idle in the sulks; it is not making the faintest effort to retain its ground. Each year that passes still further weakens its connection with the country. Yet society is composed essentially of what used to be called, in France as elsewhere, the governing classes. So that the disappearance of society as the expression of a recognised public and national force, implies necessarily the simultaneous extinction of the political chieftainship which, when there was a society in France, was supposed to be the proudest birthright and highest function of its members. And there precisely lies the explanation of the motives which are prompting the Republic to make such bitter war against society. The *nouvelles couches* have detected with alacrity, and have measured with precision, the vast advantage that would accrue to their cause from the disorganisation of the hostile camp which hitherto has been occupied by society, and has supplied leaders for France. So they invested it, besieged it, cut off its water and provisions, and have now forced its garrison to retreat defeated. But they never would have succeeded in attaining this result, or, at all events, they would not have attained it so rapidly, if the garrison had defended itself: its own negligence, its own cowardice, quite as much as the skill of the enemy, have reduced it to its present vanquished condition. Society has ceased to be all that it once was: it is no longer an acknowledged sovereign; it is no longer a dominating force; it is no longer a productive union; it is no longer a fecundating agency; it is no longer a representative principle; it is no longer a source, an origin, a creator: all these attributes have passed from its hands. The Republic has dwinned

dled it to a mere series of personal associations without any constitutive object or general bond : its national brilliancy had already vanished ; its national usefulness is gone now.

But the *nouvelles couches* have been too clever, thus far, to try to build it up again for their own use. They have destroyed it ; they are satisfied for the moment. Society is now out of their way, and they show no signs of any wish to put themselves into its place. Some few of them, it is true, are beginning to appear occasionally in official drawing-rooms ; but they do not quite seem to be in their element there. And furthermore, they must necessarily feel that it would be absurd for them to establish *salons* after demonstrating so clearly to the French people that *salons* are quite useless. Besides which, *salons* can scarcely be composed of men alone—women, too, are wanted in them ; and, judging from what is to be now contemplated in Paris, the Republic is not wealthy in the latter product. So, for all these reasons, the gap dug out by the retirement of what used to be society will probably continue unfilled until the turn of society comes round again hereafter. We need not fear that it is abolished for ever—it is too hard-lived for that ; but it is humiliating for its friends to have to stand by and look on at its present ridiculous discomfiture. The Government of the country has been snatched clean away from the well-born, the well-thinking, and the well-dressed ; a social organisation which Europe conceived to be almost an inherent part of the usages, the sympathies, and the prejudices of France, has been blown into shreds by a storm ; the elegance, the refinement, the brightness, which were once supposed to be amongst the highest of French qualities, have lost their potency—democracy has swept them out of

sight. Common people, with no names and with badly-constructed coats, have proved that France can do without the upper classes. This is clearly a case in which a Californian would exclaim “Thunder !” So houses are shut up, and pleasantnesses fade, and once-laughing women pout, and there are no echoes of talk, and tongues are rusting. Society is becoming a forgotten idea ; the functions which it once discharged in France, and the might it once wielded there, are more forgotten still. And all this has been brought about by the swelling upwards of democracy. Never was the request “*Ote-toi de là que je m’y mette*” more vigorously expressed or more feebly resisted. Decidedly the Republic is a great worker amongst men.

And now let us cast up the calculations we have been making, and see, if we can, how our total comes out.

Here is an institution which professes to show the world what France now is and wants. Well, our impression of it is, that if this is really what France wants, she has come down to the level of the United States. Other and higher results are to be got out of national life than those which this Republic is evolving. We have endeavoured to show impartially what its operations are, and nobody can pretend that, taken as a whole, they are of an elevated or elevating order. The Republic keeps down barricades because it contents the very people who habitually compose those constructions. It is backed up by a majority of the population. It has amended recently the feeling with which France is regarded beyond her frontier. But it no more practises liberty than Louis XIV. did ; on the contrary, it seems to be drifting towards the tyrannies of Radicalism. It has produced but one single Republican who is worthy of a place

in history; and it is suffocating the grace, the brilliancy, and the charm which once were counted amongst the glories of France. Yet it is not a bad specimen of a Republic—as Republics go. That a good many of the French like it is undeniable.

What are their prospects of keeping it?

Prophesying is a risky process in France, for the odds there are always against probabilities and in favour of impossibilities. But, even after allowing largely for the latter, there is no great danger in expressing the opinion that the Republic looks like lasting. Let us suppose the very worst that can happen to it. Let us conceive that it commits follies enough to disgust all France. Let us imagine that the Radicals get hold of power, and that they proceed to suppress God by a proclamation, and marriage by a law; that they render all public functions elective; that they make taxes payable by the rich alone, in proportion to their riches; that they convert the army into a national guard; and that, generally, they enforce abundantly the “subversive measures” which the Conservatives assure us are impending. What then? Will all that be capable of killing the Republic and of putting a monarchy into its place?

No—unless, indeed, those impossibilities, to which we have just alluded, behave as they did on the 18th Brumaire. Unless a soldier upsets the Republic by force, even its own worst madnesses cannot be expected to have strength enough to stifle it. The country may get frightened; it may turn right round and vote for the other side; the Republicans may find themselves in a minority in the Chamber; Broglie and Fourtou may perhaps become Ministers once more;—but, unless a general succeeds in a *pronunciamiento*, all that will leave the Re-

public where it is, for the reason that, even if these odd things happened, no one would agree with any one else as to what should be put in its place. It would cast aside the Radicals (who, presumably, would then incline to barricades again); it would become gentle and well-behaved; it would beg everybody's pardon, and promise never to do it any more;—but it would remain the Republic, and Gambetta would perhaps become dictator, as chief of the Conservatives and saviour of society, and would represent the monarch that the Monarchists could not persuade each other to appoint.

And really this is not a too fantastic dream. It may all come true. It is just as likely as anything else, and more likely than most other things. And though, as has been already said, its very likelihood is an argument against its fulfilment, it may be that—to complete the catalogue of surprises—France is about to astonish the world by acting for once in simple conformity with probabilities. Besides, what is there athwart it? It is easy to assert that this Republic cannot last; that the French have only accepted it from necessity, and have no sympathy for it; that it is a mere superficial Government; that it has scarcely any roots in the deep earth, and that its main holdings are on the surface. All that may be absolutely true; and it may be equally true that, if there were but one pretender to the throne, he would long ago have put on his crown. But, however true it be, it only proves more and more distinctly how difficult it is to put another system into the place of the present one. Things will forcedly go on as they are (unless a soldier smashes them) from sheer impossibility of selecting anything else. In the multitude of pretenders there is Republic.

JOHN CALDIGATE.—PART XIV.

CHAPTER LV.—HOW THE CONSPIRATORS THROVE.

THERE had been some indiscretion among Caldigate's friends, from which it resulted that, while Judge Bramber was considering the matter, and before the police intelligence of Scotland Yard even had stirred itself in obedience to the judge's orders, nearly all the circumstances which had been submitted to the judge had become public. Shand knew all that Bagwax had done. Bagwax was acquainted with the whole of Dick's evidence. And Hester down at Folking understood perfectly what had been revealed by each of those enthusiastic allies. Dick, as we know, had been staying at Folking, and had made his presence notable throughout the county. He had succeeded in convincing uncle Babington, and had been judged to be a false witness by all the Boltons. In that there had perhaps been no great indiscretion. But when Bagwax opened a correspondence with Mrs John Caldigate and explained to her at great length all the circumstances of the post-mark and the postage-stamps, and when at her instance he got a day's holiday and rushed down to Folking, then, as he felt himself, he was doing that of which Sir John Joram and Mr Jones would not approve. But he could not restrain himself. And why should he restrain himself when he had lost all hope of his journey to Sydney? When the prospect of that delight no longer illumined his days, why should he not enjoy the other delight of communicating his tidings,—his own discoveries,—to the afflicted lady? Unless he did so it would appear to her that Joram had done it all, and there would be no reward,—

absolutely none! So he told his tale,—at first by letter and then with his own natural eloquence. "Yes, Mrs Caldigate; the post-marks are difficult. It takes a lifetime of study to understand all the ins and outs of post-marks. To me it is A B C of course. When I had spent a week or two looking into it I was sure that impression had never been made in the way of business." Bagwax was sitting out on the lawn at Folking, and the bereaved wife, dressed in black, was near him, holding in her hand one of the photographed copies of the envelope. "It's A B C to me; but I don't wonder you shouldn't see it."

"I think I do see a good deal," said Hester.

"But any babe may understand that," said Bagwax, pressing forward and putting his forefinger on the obliteration of the postage-stamp. "You see the date in the post-mark."

"I know the date very well."

"We've had it proved that on the date given there this identical postage-stamp had not yet been manufactured. The Secretary of State can't get over that. I'll defy him."

"Why don't they release him at once, then?"

"Between you and me, Mrs Caldigate, I think it's Judge Bramber."

"He can't want to injure an innocent man."

"From what I've heard Sir John say I fancy he doesn't like to have the verdict upset. But they must do it. I'll defy them to get over that." And again he tapped the queen's head. Then he told the story of his love for Jemima, and of his engagement. Of course he

was praised and petted,—as indeed he deserved; and thus, though the house at Folking was a sad house; he enjoyed himself,—as men do when much is made of them by pretty women.

But the result of all this was that every detail of the story became known to the public, and was quite common down at Cambridge. The old squire was urgent with Mr Seely, asking why it was that when those things were known an instant order had not come from the Secretary of State for the liberation of his son. Mr Seely had not been altogether pleased at the way in which Sir John had gone to work, and was still convinced of the guilt of his own client. His answer was therefore unsatisfactory, and the old squire proclaimed his intention of proceeding himself to London and demanding an interview with the Secretary of State. Then the Cambridge newspapers took up the subject,—generally in the Caldigate interest,—and from thence the matter was transferred to the metropolitan columns,—which, with one exception, were strong in favour of such a reversal of the verdict as could be effected by a pardon from the Queen. The one exception was very pellucid, very unanswerable, and very cold-blooded. It might have been written by Judge Bramber himself, but that Judge Bramber would sooner have cut his hand off than have defiled it by making public aught that had come before him judicially or officially. But all Judge Bramber's arguments were there set forth. Dick wished his father at once to proceed against the paper for libel because the paper said that his word could not be taken for much. The post-mark theory was exposed to derision. There was no doubt much in the postage-stamp, but not enough to

upset the overwhelming weight of evidence by which the verdict had been obtained. And so the case became really public, and the newspapers were bought and read with the avidity which marks those festive periods in which some popular criminal is being discussed at every breakfast-table.

Much of this had occurred before the intelligence of Scotland Yard had been set to work in obedience to Judge Bramber. The papers had been a day or two in the Home Office, and three or four days in the judge's hands before he could look at them. To Hester and the old squire at Folking the incarceration of that injured darling was the one thing in all the world which now required attention. To redress that terrible grievance, judges, secretaries, thrones, and parliaments, should have left their wonted tracks and thought of nothing till it had been accomplished. But Judge Bramber, in the performance of his duties, was never hurried; and at the Home Office a delay but of three or four days amounted to official haste. Thus it came to pass that all that Bagwax had done and all that Shand had said were known to the public at large before the intelligence of Scotland Yard was at work,—before anybody had as yet done anything.

Among the public were Euphemia Smith and Mr Crinkett,—Adamson also, and Anna Young, the other witness. Since the trial, this confraternity had not passed an altogether fraternal life. When the money had been paid, the woman had insisted on having the half. She, indeed, had carried the cheque for the amount away from the Jericho Coffee-house. It had been given into her hands and those of Crinkett conjointly, and she had secured the document. The amount was payable to their joint order,

and each had felt that it would be better to divide the spoil in peace. Crinkett had taken his half with many grumblings, because he had, in truth, arranged the matter and hitherto paid the expenses. Then the woman had wished to start at once for Australia, taking the other female with her. But to this Crinkett had objected. They would certainly, he said, be arrested for breaking their bail at whatever port they might reach,—and why should they go, seeing that the money had been paid to them on the distinct understanding that they were not pledged to abandon the prosecution? Most unwillingly the woman remained;—but did so fearing lest worse evil might betide her. Then there had arisen quarrels about the money between the two females, and between Crinkett and Adamson. It was in vain that Crinkett showed that, were he to share with Adamson, there would be very little of the plunder left to him. Adamson demanded a quarter of the whole, short of a quarter of the expenses, declaring that were it not paid to him, he would divulge everything to the police. The woman, who had got her money in her hand, and who was, in truth, spending it very quickly, would give back nothing for expenses, unless her expenses in England also were considered. Nor would she give a shilling to Anna Young, beyond an allowance of £2 a-week, till, as she said, they were both back in the colony again. But Anna Young did not wish to go back to the colony. And so they quarrelled till the trial came and was over.

The verdict had been given on the 20th July, and it was about the middle of September when the newspapers made public all that Shand and Bagwax between them had said and done. At that time the

four conspirators were still in England. The two men were living a wretched life in London, and the women were probably not less wretched at Brighton. Mrs Smith, when she learned that Dick Shand was alive and in England, immediately understood her danger,—understood her danger, but did not at all measure the security which might come to her from the nature of Dick's character. She would have flown instantly without a word to any one, but that the other woman watched her day and night. They did not live under the same roof, nor in similar style. Euphemia Smith wore silk, and endeavoured to make the best of what female charms her ill mode of life had left to her; while Young was content with poor apparel and poor living,—but spent her time in keeping guard on the other. The woman in silk knew that were she to leave her lodgings for half a day without the knowledge of the woman in calico, the woman in calico would at once reveal everything to the police. But when she understood the point which had been raised and made as to the post-mark,—which she did understand thoroughly,—then she comprehended also her own jeopardy, and hurried up to London to see Crinkett. And she settled matters with Young. If Young would go back with her to Australia, everything there should be made pleasant. Terms were made at the Brighton station. Anna Young was to receive two thousand pounds in London, and would then remain as companion with her old mistress.

In London there was a close conference, at first between the two principals only. Crinkett thought that he was comparatively safe. He had sworn to nothing about the letter; and though he himself had prepared the envelope, no proof of

his handiwork was forthcoming that he had done so. But he was quite ready to start again to some distant portion of the earth's surface,—to almost any distant portion of the earth's surface,—if she would consent to a joining of purses. "And who is to keep the joint purse?" asked Mrs Smith, not without a touch of grand irony.

"Me, of course," said Crinkett. "A man always must have the money."

"I'd sooner have fourteen years for perjury, like the Claimant," said Mrs Smith, with a grand resolve that, come what might, she would stick to her own money.

But at last it was decided. Adamson would not stir a step, but consented to remain with two thousand pounds, which Crinkett was compelled to pay him. Crinkett handed him the money within the precincts of one of the city banks not an hour before the sailing of the *Julius Vogel* from the London Docks for Auckland in New Zealand. At that moment both the women were on board the *Julius Vogel*, and the gang was so far safe. Crinkett was there in time, and they were carried safely down the river. New Zealand had been chosen because there they would be further from their persecutors than at any other spot they could reach. And the journey would occupy long, and they were pervaded by an idea that as they had been hitherto brought in question as to no crime, the officers of justice would hardly bring them back from so great a distance.

The *Julius Vogel* touched at Plymouth on her outward voyage. How terribly inconvenient must be this habit of touching to passengers going from home, such as Euphemia Smith and Thomas Crinkett! And the wretched vessel, which had made a quick passage round from the Thames, lay two days and two

nights at Dartmouth, before it went on to Plymouth. Our friends, of course, did not go on shore. Our friends, who were known as Mr Catley and his two widowed sisters, Mrs Salmon and Mrs York, kept themselves very quiet, and were altogether well-behaved. But the women could not restrain some manifestation of their impatience. Why did not the vessel start? Why were they to be delayed? Then the captain made known to them that the time for starting had not yet come. Three o'clock on that day was the time fixed for starting. As the slow moments wore themselves away, the women trembled, huddled together on the poop of the vessel; while Crinkett, never letting the pipe out of his mouth, stood leaning against the taffrail, looking towards the port, gazing across the waters to see whether anything was coming towards the ship which might bode evil to his journey. Then there came the bustle preparatory to starting, and Crinkett thought that he was free, at any rate, for that journey. But such bustle spreads itself over many minutes. Quarter of an hour succeeded quarter of an hour, and still they were not off. The last passenger came on board, and yet they were not off. Then Crinkett with his sharp eyes saw another boat pushed off from the shore, and heard a voice declare that the *Julius Vogel* had received a signal not to start. Then Crinkett knew that a time of desperate trouble had come upon him, and he bethought himself what he would do. Were he to jump overboard, they would simply pick him up. Nor was he quite sure that he wished to die. The money which he had kept had not been obtained fraudulently, and would be left to him, he thought, after that term of imprisonment which it might be his fate to en-

ture. But then, again, it might be that no such fate was in store for him. He had sworn only to the marriage and not to the letter. It might still be possible that he should be acquitted, while the woman was condemned. So he stood perfectly still, and said not a word to either of his companions as to the boat which was coming. He could soon see two men in the guise of policemen, and another who was certainly a policeman, though not in that guise. He stood there very quiet, and determined that he would tell his own name and those of the two women at the first question that was asked him. On the day but one following, Crinkett and Euphemia Smith were committed in London to take their trial for perjury.

Adamson, when he had read the reports in the newspapers, and had learned that the postage-stamp had been detected, and that Shand was at home, also looked about him a little. He talked over the matter at great length with Crinkett, but he did not tell Crinkett all his own ideas. Some of them he did make known to Crinkett. He would not himself go to the colonies with Crinkett, nor would he let Crinkett go till some share of the plunder had been made over to him. This, after many words, had been fixed at two thousand pounds; and the money, as we have seen, had been paid. Crinkett had been careful to make the payment at as late a moment as possible. He had paid the amount,—very much to his own regret when he saw that boat coming,—because he was quite sure that Adamson would at once have denounced him to the police, had he not done so. Adamson might denounce him in spite of the payment;—but the payment appeared to him to be his best chance. When he saw the boat coming, he

knew that he had simply thrown away his two thousand pounds.

In truth, he had simply thrown it away. There is no comfort in having kept one's word honestly, when one would fain have broken it dishonestly. Adamson, with the large roll of bank-notes still in his pocket, had gone at once to Scotland Yard and told his story. At that time all the details had been sent by the judge to the police-office, and it was understood that a great inquiry was to be made. In the first place, Crinkett and Euphemia Smith were wanted. Adamson soon made his bargain. He could tell something,—could certainly tell where Crinkett and the women were to be found; but he must be assured that any little peccadillo of which he himself might have been guilty, would be overlooked. The peccadillo on his part had been very small, but he must be assured. Then he was assured, and told the police at once that they could stop the two travellers at Plymouth.

And of course he told more than that. There had been no marriage,—no real marriage. He had been induced to swear that there had been a marriage, because he had regarded the promise and the cohabitation as making a marriage,—“in heaven.” So he had expressed himself, and so excused himself. But now his eyes had been opened to the error of his ways, and he was free to acknowledge that he had committed perjury. There had been no marriage;—certainly none at all. He made his deposition, and bound himself down, and submitted to live under the surveillance of the police till the affair should be settled. Then he would be able to go where he listed, with two thousand pounds in his pocket. He was a humble, silent, and generally obedient man, but in this affair he had managed to thrive better than

any of the others. Anna Young was afterwards allowed to fill the same position ; but she failed in getting any of the money. While the women were in London together, and as they were starting, Euphemia Smith had been too strong for her

companion. She had declared that she would not pay the money till they were afloat, and then that she would not pay it till they had left Plymouth. When the police came on board the Julius Vogel, Anna Young had as yet received nothing.

CHAPTER LVI.—THE BOLTONS ARE VERY FIRM.

While all this was going on, as the general opinion in favour of Caldigate was becoming stronger every day, when even Judge Bramber had begun to doubt, the feeling which had always prevailed at Puritan Grange was growing in intensity and converting itself from a conviction into a passion. That the wicked bigamist had falsely and fraudulently robbed her of her daughter was a religion to Mrs Bolton ;—and, as the matter had proceeded, the old banker had become ever more and more submissive to his wife's feelings. All the Cambridge Boltons were in accord on this subject,—who had never before been in accord on any subject. Robert Bolton, who understood thoroughly each point as it was raised on behalf of Caldigate, was quite sure that the old squire was spending his money freely, his own money and his son's, with the view of getting the verdict set aside. What was so clear as that Dick Shand and Bagwax, and probably also Smithers from the Stamps and Taxes, were all in the pay of old Caldigate? At this time the defection of Adamson was not known to him, but he did know that a strong case was being made with the Secretary of State. "If it costs me all I have in the world I will expose them," he said up in London to his brother William, the London barrister.

The barrister was not quite in accord with the other Boltons. He

also had been disposed to think that Dick Shand and Bagwax might have been bribed by the squire. It was at any rate possible. And the twenty thousand pounds paid to the accusing witnesses had always stuck in his throat when he had endeavoured to believe that Caldigate might be innocent. It seemed to him still that the balance of evidence was against the man who had taken his sister away from her home. But he was willing to leave that to the Secretary of State and to the judge. He did not see why his sister should not have her husband and be restored to the world,—if Judge Bramber should at last decide that so it ought to be. No money could bribe Judge Bramber. No undue persuasion could weaken him. If that Rhadamanthus should at last say that the verdict had been a wrong verdict, then,—for pity's sake, for love's sake, in the name of humanity, and for the sake of all Boltons present and to come,—let the man be considered innocent.

But Robert Bolton was more intent on his purpose, and was a man of stronger passion. Perhaps some real religious scruple told him that a woman should not live with a man who was not her true husband,—let any judge say what he might. But hatred, probably, had more to do with it than religion. It was he who had first favoured Caldigate's claim on Hester's hand, and he who had been most grievously deceived. From the moment in

which the conviction had come upon him that Caldigate had even promised his hand in marriage to Euphemia Smith, he had become Caldigate's enemy, — his bitter enemy; and now he could not endure the thought that he should be called upon again to receive Caldigate as his brother-in-law. Caldigate's guilt was an idea fixed in his mind which no Secretary of State, no Judge Bramber, no brother could expel.

And so it came to pass that there were hard words between him and his brother. "You are wrong," said William.

"How wrong? You cannot say that you believe him to be innocent."

"If he receives the Queen's pardon he is to be considered as innocent."

"Even though you should know him to have been guilty?"

"Well, — yes," said William, slowly, and perhaps indiscreetly. "It is a matter in which a man's guilt or innocence must be held to depend upon what persons in due authority have declared. As he is now guilty of bigamy in consequence of the verdict, even though he should never have committed the offence, so should he be presumed to be innocent, when that verdict has been set aside by the Queen's pardon on the advice of her proper officers,—even though he committed the offence."

"You would have your sister live with a man who has another wife alive? It comes to that."

"For all legal purposes he would have no other wife alive."

"The children would be illegitimate."

"There you are decidedly wrong," said the barrister. "The children would be legitimate. Even at this moment, without any pardon, the child could claim and would enter in upon his inheritance."

"The next of kin would claim," said the attorney.

"The burden of proving the former marriage would then be on him," said the barrister.

"The verdict would be evidence," said the attorney.

"Certainly," said the barrister; "but such evidence would not be worth a straw after a Queen's pardon, given on the advice of the judge who had tried the former case. As yet we know not what the judge may say,—we do not know the facts as they have been expounded to him. But if Caldigate be regarded as innocent by the world at large, it will be our duty so to regard him."

"I will never look on him as Hester's husband," said the attorney.

"I and Fanny have already made up our minds that we would at once ask them to come to us for a month," said the barrister.

"Nothing on earth will induce me to speak to him," said the attorney.

"Then you will be very cruel to Hester," said the barrister.

"It is dreadful to me," said the attorney, "that you should care so little for your sister's reputation." And so they quarrelled. Robert, leaving the house in great dudgeon, went down on the following morning to Cambridge.

At Puritan Grange the matter was argued rather by rules of religion than of law; but as the rules of law were made by those interested to fit themselves to expediency, so were the rules of religion fitted to prejudice. No hatred could be more bitter than that which Mrs Bolton felt for the man whom she would permit no one to call her son-in-law. Something as to the postage-stamp and the post-marks was told her; but with a woman's indomitable obstinacy

she closed her mind against all that,—as indeed did also the banker. “Is her position in the world to depend upon a postage-stamp?” said the banker, intending to support his wife. Then she arose in her wrath, and was very eloquent. “Her position in the world!” she said. “What does it matter? It is her soul! Though all men and all women should call her a castaway, it would be nothing if the Lord knew her to be guiltless. But she will be living as an adulteress with an adulterer. The law has told her that it is so. She will feel every day and every night that she is a transgressor, and will vainly seek consolation by telling herself that men have pardoned that which God has condemned.” And again she broke forth: “The Queen’s pardon! What right has the Queen to pardon an adulterer who has crept into the bosom of a family and destroyed all that he found there? What sense of justice can any queen have in her bosom who will send such a one back, to heap sin upon sin, to fasten the bonds of iniquity on the soul of my child?” Postage-stamps and post-marks and an old envelope! The triviality of the things as compared with the importance of everlasting life made her feel that they were unworthy to be even noticed. It did not occur to her that the presence of a bodkin might be ample evidence of murder. Post-marks indeed,—when her daughter’s everlasting life was the matter in question! Then they told her of Dick Shand. She, too, had heard of Dick Shand. He had been a gambler. So she said,—without much truth. He was known for a drunkard, a spendthrift, a penniless idle ne’er-do-well who had wandered back home without clothes to his back;—which was certainly

untrue, as the yellow trousers had been bought at San Francisco;—and now she was told that the hated miscreant was to be released from prison because such a one as this was ready to take an oath! She had a knack of looking on such men,—ne’er-do-wells like Dick Shand and Caldigate,—as human beings who had, as it were, lost their souls before death, so that it was useless to think of them otherwise than as already damned. That Caldigate should become a good, honest, loving husband, or Dick Shand a truth-speaking witness, was to her thinking much more improbable than that a camel should go through the eye of a needle. She would press her lips together and grind her teeth and shake her head when any one about her spoke of a doubt. The man was in prison, at any rate, for two years,—locked up safe for so much time, as it might be a wild beast which with infinite trouble had been caged. And now they were talking of undoing the bars and allowing the monster to gorge himself again with his prey!

“If the Queen were told the truth she would never do it,” she said to her amazed husband. “The Queen is a mother and a woman who kneels in prayer before her Maker. Something should be done, so that the truth may be made known to her.”

To illuminate all the darkness which was betrayed by this appeal to him was altogether beyond Mr Bolton’s power. He appreciated the depth of the darkness. He knew, for instance, that the Queen herself would in such a matter act so simply in accordance with the advice of some one else, that the pardon, if given, would not in the least depend on her Majesty’s sentiments. To call it the Queen’s pardon was a simple figure of speech. This was manifest to him, and he

was driven to endeavour to make it manifest to her. She spoke of a petition to be sent direct to the Queen, and insinuated that Robert Bolton, if he were anything like a real brother, would force himself into her Majesty's presence. "It isn't the Queen," said her husband.

"It is the Queen. Mercy is the prerogative of the Crown. Even I know as much as that. And she is to be made to believe that this is mercy!"

"Her Majesty does what her Ministers tell her."

"But she wouldn't if she was told the truth. I do not for a moment believe that she would allow such a man as that to be let loose about the world like a roaring lion if she knew all that you and I know. Mercy indeed!"

"It won't be meant for mercy, my dear."

"What then? Do you not know that the man has another wife alive, —a wife much more suited to him than our poor darling? Nobody would hear my voice while there was yet time. And so my child, my only one, was taken away from me by her own father and her own brothers, and no one now will exert himself to bring her back to her home!" The poor old man had had but little comfort in his home since his daughter's marriage, and was now more miserable than ever.

Then there came a letter from Hester to her mother. Since Mrs Bolton's last visit to Folking there had been some correspondence maintained. A few letters had passed, very sad on each side, in which the daughter had assured the mother of her undying love, and in which the mother had declared that day and night she prayed for her child. But of Caldigate, neither on one side nor on the other had mention been made.

Now Hester, who was full of hope, and sick with hope deferred, endeavoured to convince her mother that the entire charge against her husband had been proved by new evidence to be false. She recapitulated all the little details with which the diligent reader must by this time be too well acquainted. She made quite clear, as she thought, the infamous plot by which the envelope had been made to give false evidence, and she added the assurance that certainly before long her dear, dearest, ill-used husband would be restored to her. Then she went on to implore her mother's renewed affection both for herself and him and her boy, promising that by-gones should all be by-gones; and then she ended by declaring that though the return of her husband would make her very happy, she could not be altogether happy unless her parents also should be restored to her.

To this there came a crushing answer, as follows:—

"PURITAN GRANGE, 28th September.

"DEAREST HESTER,—It was unnecessary that you should ask for a renewal of your mother's love. There has never been a moment in which she has not loved you,—more dearly, I fear, than one human creature should ever love another. When I was strongest in opposing you, I did so from love. When I watched you in the hall all those hours, endeavouring to save you from further contact with the man who had injured you, I did it from love. You need not doubt my love.

"But as to all the rest, I cannot agree to a word that you say. They are plotting with false evidence to rescue the man from prison. I will not give way to it when my soul tells me that it is untrue. As your mother, I can only implore you to come back to me, and to save your-

self from the further evil which is coming upon you. It may be that he will be enabled to escape, and then you will again have to live with a husband that is no husband, —unless you will listen to your mother's words.

"You are thinking of the good things of this world,—of a home with all luxuries and ease, and of triumph over those who, for the good of your soul, have hitherto marred your worldly joys. Is it thus that you hope to win that crown of everlasting life which you have been taught to regard as the one thing worthy of a Christian's struggles? Is it not true that, since that wretched day on which you were taken away from me, you have allowed your mind to pass from thoughts of eternity to longings after vain joys in this bitter, fruitless vale of tears? If that be so, can he who has so encouraged you have been good to you? Do you remember David's words; 'Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the Lord our God'? And then, again: 'They are brought down and fallen; but we are risen and stand upright.' Ask yourself whether you have stood upright or have fallen, since you left your father's house; whether you have trusted in the Lord your God, or in horses and chariots,—that is, in the vain comforts of an easy life? If it be so, can it be for your good that you have left your father's house? And should you not accept this scourge that has fallen upon you as a healing balm from the hands of the Lord?

"My child, I have no other answer to send you. That I love you till my very bowels yearn after you is most true. But I cannot profess to believe a lie, or declare that to be good which I know to be evil.

"May the Lord bless you, and

turn your feet aright, and restore you to your loving mother.

"MARY BOLTON."

When Hester read this she was almost crushed. The delay since the new tidings had come to her had not, in truth, been very great. It was not yet quite a month since Shand had been at Folking, and a shorter period since the discoveries of Bagwax had been explained to her. But the days seemed to her to be very long; and day after day she thought that on that day at least the news of his promised release would be brought to her. And now, instead of these news, there came this letter from her mother, harder almost in its words than any words which had hitherto been either written or spoken in the matter. Even when all the world should have declared him innocent, —when the Queen, and the great officer of State, and that stern judge, should have said that he was innocent,—even then her cruel mother would refuse to receive him! She had been invited to ask herself certain questions as to the state of her soul, and as to the teaching she had received since her marriage. The subject is one on which there is no possible means of convergence between persons who have learned to differ. Her mother's allusions to chariots and horses was to her the enthusiasm of a fanatic. No doubt, teaching had come to her from her husband, but it had come at the period of life at which such lessons are easily learned. "Brought down and fallen!" she said to herself. "Yes, we are all brought down and fallen;" —for she had not at all discarded the principles of her religious faith;—"but a woman will hardly raise herself by being untrue to her husband." She, too, yearned for her mother;—but there was never a moment's doubt in her mind to

which she would cling if at last it should become necessary that one should be cast off.

Mrs Bolton, when the letter had been despatched, sat brooding over it in deep regret mixed with deeper anger. She was preparing for herself an awful tragedy. She must

be severed for ever from her daughter, and so severed with the opinion of all her neighbours against her! But what was all that if she had done right? Or of what service to her would be the contrary if she were herself to think,—nay, to know,—that she had done wrong?

CHAPTER LVII.—SQUIRE CALDIGATE AT THE HOME OFFICE.

When October came no information from the Secretary of State's office had yet reached Folking, and the two inhabitants there were becoming almost despondent as well as impatient. There was nobody with whom they could communicate. Sir John Joram had been obliged to answer a letter from the squire by saying that, as soon as there was anything to tell the tidings would assuredly be communicated to him from the Home Office. The letter had seemed to be cold and almost uncivil; but Sir John had in truth said all that he could say. To raise hopes which, after all, might be fallacious, would have been, on his part, a great fault. Nor, in spite of his bet, was he very sanguine, sharing his friend Honybun's opinion as to Judge Bramber's obstinacy. And there was a correspondence between the elder Caldigate and the Home Office, in which the letters from the squire were long and well argued, whereas the replies, which always came by return of post, were short and altogether formal. Some assistant under-secretary would sign his name at the end of three lines, in which the correspondent was informed that as soon as the matter was settled the result would be communicated.

Who does not know the sense of aggravated injustice which comes upon a sufferer when redress for an acknowledged evil is delayed? The wronged one feels that the whole

world must be out of joint in that all the world does not rise up in indignation. So it was with the old squire, who watched Hester's cheek becoming paler day by day, and who knew by her silence that the strong hopes which in his presence had been almost convictions were gradually giving way to a new despair. Then he would abuse the Secretary of State, say hard things of the Queen, express his scorn as to the fatuous absurdities of the English law, and would make her understand by his anger that he also was losing hope.

During these days preparations were being made for the committal of Crinkett and Euphemia Smith, nor would Judge Bramber report to the Secretary till he was convinced that there was sufficient evidence for their prosecution. It was not much to him that Caldigate should spend another week in prison. The condition of Hester did not even come beneath his ken. When he found allusion to it in the papers before him, he treated it as matter which should not have been adduced,—in bringing which under his notice there had been something akin to contempt of court, as though an endeavour had been made to talk him over in private. He knew his own character, and was indignant that such an argument should have been used with himself. He was perhaps a little more slow,—something was added to his deliberation,

—because he was told that a young wife and an infant child were anxiously expecting the liberation of the husband and father. It was not as yet clear to Judge Bramber that the woman had any such husband, or that the child could claim his father.

At this crisis, when the first week in October had dragged itself tediously along, Mr Caldigate, in a fit which was half rage and half moodiness, took himself off to London. He did not tell Hester that he was going till the morning on which he started, and then simply assured her that she should hear from him by every post till he returned.

“You will tell me the truth, father.”

“If I know it myself, I will tell you.”

“But you will conceal nothing?”

“No,—I will conceal nothing. If I find that they are all utterly unjust, altogether hard-hearted, absolutely indifferent to the wrong they have done, I will tell you even that.” And thus he went.

He had hardly any fixed purpose in going. He knew that Sir John Joram was not in London, and that if he were in town he ought not to be made subject to visits on behalf of clients. To call upon any judge in such a matter would be altogether out of place, but to call upon such a judge as Judge Bramber, would be very vain indeed. He had in his head some hazy idea of forcing an answer from the officials in Downing Street; but in his heart he did not believe that he should be able to get beyond the messengers. He was one of a class, not very small in numbers, who, from cultivating within their bosom a certain tendency towards suspicion, have come to think that all Government servants are idle, dilatory, supercilious, and incompetent. That some of these faults may have existed among

those who took wages from the Crown in the time of George III., is perhaps true. And the memory of those times has kept alive the accusation. The vitality of these prejudices calls to mind the story of the Nottinghamshire farmer who, when told of the return of Charles II., asked what had become of Charles I. Naseby, Worcester, and the fatal day at Whitehall had not yet reached him. Tidings of these things had only been approaching him during these twelve years. The true character of the Civil Service is only now approaching the intelligence of those who are still shaking their heads over the delinquencies of the last century. But old Mr Caldigate was a man peculiarly susceptible to such hard judgments. From the crown down to the black helmet worn by the policeman who was occasionally to be seen on Folking causeway, he thought that all such headpieces were coverings for malpractices. The bishop’s wig had, he thought, disappeared as being too ridiculous for the times; but even for the judge’s wig he had no respect. Judge Bramber was to him simply pretentious, and a Secretary of State no better than any other man. In this frame of mind how was it probable that he should do any good at the Home Office?

But in this frame of mind he went to the Home Office, and asked boldly for the great man. It was then eleven o’clock in the morning, and neither had the great man, nor even any of the deputy great men, as yet made their appearance. Mr Caldigate of course fell back upon his old opinion as to public functionaries, and, mentally, applied opprobrious epithets to men who, taking the public pay, could not be at their posts an hour before mid-day. He was not aware that the great man and the first deputy

great man were sitting in the House of Commons at 2 A.M. on that morning, and that the office generally was driven by the necessity of things to accommodate itself to Parliamentary exigencies.

Then he was asked his business. How could he explain to a messenger that his son had been unjustly convicted of bigamy and was now in prison as a criminal? So he left his card and said that he would call again at two.

At that hour precisely he appeared again and was told that the great man himself could not see him. Then he nearly boiled over in his wrath, while the messenger, with all possible courtesy, went on to explain that one of the deputies was ready to receive him. The deputy was the Honourable Septimus Brown, of whom it may be said that the Home Office was so proud that it considered itself to be superior to all other public offices whatever simply because it possessed Brown. He had been there for forty years, and for many sessions past had been the salvation of Parliamentary secretaries and under-secretaries. He was the uncle of an earl, and the brother-in-law of a duke and a marquis. Not to know Brown was, at the West End, simply to be unknown. Brooke's was proud of him; and without him the "Travellers" would not have been such a Travellers as it is. But Mr Caldigate, when he was told that Mr Brown would see him, almost left the lobby in instant disgust. When he asked who was Mr Brown, there came a muttered reply in which "permanent" was the only word audible to him. He felt that were he to go away in dudgeon simply because Brown was the name of the man whom he was called upon to see, he would put himself in the wrong. He would by so doing close his own

mouth against complaint, which, to Mr Caldigate, would indeed have been a cutting of his own nose off his own face. With a scowl, therefore, he consented to be taken away to Mr Brown.

He was, in the first place, somewhat scared by the room into which he was shown, which was very large and very high. There were two clerks with Mr Brown, who vanished, however, as soon as the squire entered the room. It seemed that Mr Brown was certainly of some standing in the office, or he would not have had two arm-chairs and a sofa in his room. Mr Caldigate, when he first consented to see Mr Brown, had expected to be led into an uncarpeted chamber where there would have been half-a-dozen other clerks.

"I have your card, Mr Caldigate," said the official. "No doubt you have called in reference to your son."

The squire had determined to be very indignant,—very indignant even with the Secretary of State himself, to whose indifference he attributed the delay which had occurred;—but almost more than indignant when he found that he was to be fobbed off with Mr Brown. But there was something in the gentleman's voice which checked his indignation. There was something in Mr Brown's eye, a mixture of good-humour and authority, which made him feel that he ought not to be angry with the gentleman till he was quite sure of the occasion. Mr Brown was a handsome hale old man with grey whiskers and greyish hair, with a well-formed nose and a broad forehead, carefully dressed with a light waistcoat and a checked linen cravat, wearing a dark-blue frock-coat, and very well made boots,—an old man, certainly, but who looked as though old age must

naturally be the happiest time of life. When a man's digestion is thoroughly good and his pockets adequately filled, it probably is so. Such were the circumstances of Mr Brown, who, as the squire looked at him, seemed to partake more of the nature of his nephew and brother-in-law than of the Browns generally.

"Yes, sir," said Mr Caldigate; "I have called about my son, who, I think I may undertake to say, has been wrongly condemned, and is now wrongly retained in prison."

"You beg all the questions, Mr Caldigate," said the permanent under-secretary, with a smile.

"I maintain that what you call the questions are now so clearly proved as not to admit of controversy. No one can deny that a conspiracy was got up against my son."

"I shall not deny it, certainly, Mr Caldigate. But in truth I know very little or nothing about it." The squire, who had been seated, rose from his chair,—as in wrath,—about to pour forth his indignation. Why was he treated in this way,—he who was there on a subject of such tragic interest to him? When all the prospects, reputation, and condition of his son were at stake, he was referred to a gentleman who began by telling him that he knew nothing about the matter! "If you will sit down for a moment, Mr Caldigate, I will explain all that can be explained," said Mr Brown, who was weather-wise in such matters, and had seen the signs of a coming storm.

"Certainly I will sit down."

"In such cases as this the Secretary of State never sees those who are interested. It is not right that he should do so."

"There might be somebody to do so."

"But not somebody who has been concerned in the inquiry. The Secretary of State, if he saw you, could only refuse to impart to you any portion of the information which he himself may possess, because it cannot be right that he should give an opinion in the matter while he himself is in doubt. You may be sure that he will open his mouth to no one except to those from whom he may seek assistance, till he has been enabled to advise her Majesty that her Majesty's pardon should be given or refused."

"When will that be?"

"I am afraid that I cannot name a day. You, Mr Caldigate are, I know, a gentleman of position in your county and a magistrate. Cannot you understand how minutely facts must be investigated when a Minister of the Crown is called upon to accept the responsibility of either upsetting or confirming the verdict of a jury?"

"The facts are as clear as daylight."

"If they be so, your son will soon be a free man."

"If you could feel what his wife suffers in the meantime!"

"Though I did feel it,—though we all felt it; as probably we do, for though we be officials still we are men,—how should that help us? You would not have a man pardoned because his wife suffers!"

"Knowing how she suffered, I do not think I should let much grass grow under my feet while I was making the inquiry."

"I hope there is no such grass grows here. The truth is, Mr Caldigate, that, as a rule, no person coming here on such an errand as yours is received at all. The Secretary of State cannot, either in his own person or in that of those who are under him, put himself in communication with the friends of individuals who are under sentence.

I am sure that you, as a man conversant with the laws, must see the propriety of such a rule."

"I think I have a right to express my natural anxiety."

"I will not deny it. The post is open to you, and though I fear that our replies may not be considered altogether satisfactory, we do give our full attention to the letters we receive. When I heard that you had been here, and had expressed an intention of returning, from respect to yourself personally I desired that you might be shown into my room. But I could not have done that had it not been that I myself have not been concerned in this matter." Then he got up from his seat, and Mr Caldigate found himself compelled to leave the room with thanks rather than with indignation.

He walked out of the big building into Downing Street, and down the steps into the park. And going into the gardens, he wandered about them for more than an hour, sometimes walking slowly along the water-side, and then seating himself for a while on one of the benches. What must he say to Hester in the letter which he must write as soon as he was back at his hotel? He tried to sift some wheat out of what he was pleased to call the chaff of Mr Brown's courtesy. Was there not some indication to be found in it of what the result might be? If there were any such indication, it was, he thought, certainly adverse to his son. In whose bosom might be the ultimate decision,—whether in that of the Secretary, or the judge, or of some experienced clerk in the Secretary's office,—it was manifest that the facts which had now been proven to the world at large for many days, had none of the effects on that bosom which they had on his own. Could it be that Shand was false, that Bagwax

was false, that the postage-stamp was false,—and that he only believed them to be true? Was it possible that after all his son had married the woman? He crept back to his hotel in Jermyn Street, and there he wrote his letter.

"I think I shall be home to-morrow, but I will not say so for certain. I have been at the Home Office, but they would tell me nothing. A man was very civil to me, but explained that he was civil only because he knew nothing about the case. I think I shall call on Mr Bagwax at the Post-office to-morrow, and after that return to Folking. Send in for the day-mail letters, and then you will hear from me again if I mean to stay."

At ten o'clock on the following day he was at the Post-office, and there he found Bagwax prepared to take his seat exactly at that hour. Thereupon he resolved, with true radical impetuosity, that Bagwax was a much better public servant than Mr Brown. "Well, Mr Caldigate,—so we've got it all clear at last," said Bagwax.

There was a triumph in the tone of the clerk's voice which was not intelligible to the despondent old squire. "It is not at all clear to me," he said.

"Of course you've heard?"

"Heard what? I know all about the postage-stamp, of course."

"If Secretaries of State and judges of the Court of Queen's Bench only had their wits about them, the postage-stamp ought to have been quite sufficient," said Bagwax, sententiously.

"What more is there?"

"For the sake of letting the world know what can be done in our department, it is a pity that there should be anything more."

"But there is something. For God's sake tell me, Mr Bagwax."

"You haven't heard that they

caught Crinkett just as he was leaving Plymouth?"

"Not a word."

"And the woman. They've got the lot of 'em, Mr Caldigate. Adamson and the other woman have agreed to give evidence, and are to be let go."

"When did you hear it?"

"Well,—it is in the 'Daily Tell-tale.' But I knew it last night,—from a particualar source. I have been a good deal thrown in with Scotland Yard since this began, Mr Caldigate, and of course I hear things." Then it occurred to the squire that perhaps he had flown a little too high in going at once to the Home Office. They might have

told him more, perhaps, in Scotland Yard. "But it's all true. The depositions have already been made. Adamson and Young have sworn that they were present at no marriage. Crinkett, they say, means to plead guilty; but the woman sticks to it like wax."

The squire had written a letter by the day-mail to say that he would remain in London that further day. He now wrote again, at the Post-office, telling Hester all that Bagwax had told him, and declaring his purpose of going at once to Scotland Yard.

If this story were true, then certainly his son would soon be liberated.

CHAPTER LVIII.—MR SMIRKIE IS ILL-USED.

It was on Tuesday, October 28th, that Mr Caldigate made his visit to the Home Office, and on the Thursday he returned to Cambridge. On the platform whom should he meet but his brother-in-law Squire Babington, who had come into Cambridge that morning intent on hearing something further about his nephew. He, too, had read a paragraph in his newspaper, 'The Snapper,' as to Crinkett and Euphemia Smith.

"Thomas Crinkett, and Euphemia Smith, who gave evidence against Mr John Caldigate in the well-known trial at the last Cambridge assizes, have been arrested at Plymouth just as they were about to leave the country for New Zealand. These are the persons to whom it was proved that Caldigate had paid the enormous sum of twenty thousand pounds a few days before the trial. It is alleged that they are to be indicted for perjury. If this be true, it implies the innocence of Mr Caldigate, who, as our readers will remember, was convicted of bigamy.

There will be much in the whole case for Mr Caldigate to regret, but nothing so much as the loss of that very serious sum of money. It would be idle to deny that it was regarded by the jury, and the judge, and the public as a bribe to the witnesses. Why it should have been paid will now probably remain for ever a mystery."

The squire read this over three times before he quite understood the gist of it, and at last perceived,—or thought that he perceived,—that if this were true the innocence of his nephew was incontestable. But Julia, who seemed to prefer the paternal mansion at Babington to her own peculiar comforts and privileges at Plum-cum-Pippins, declared that she didn't believe a word of it; and aunt Polly, whose animosity to her nephew had somewhat subsided, was not quite inclined to accept the statement at once. Aunt Polly expressed an opinion that newspapers were only born to lie, but added that had she seen the news anywhere else she

would not have been a bit surprised. The squire was prepared to swear by the tidings. If such a thing was not to be put into a newspaper, where was it to be put? Aunt Polly could not answer this question, but assisted in persuading her husband to go into Cambridge for further information.

"I hope this is true," said the Suffolk squire, tendering his hand cordially to his brother-in-law. He was a man who could throw all his heart into an internecine quarrel on a Monday and forget the circumstance altogether on the Tuesday.

"Of what are you speaking?" asked the Squire of Folking, with his usual placid look, partly indifferent and partly sarcastic, covering so much contempt of which the squire from Suffolk was able to read nothing at all.

"About the man and the woman, the witnesses who are to be put in prison at Plymouth, and who now say just the contrary to what they said before."

"I do not think that can be true," said Mr Caldigate.

"Then you haven't seen the 'Snapper?'" asked Mr Babington, dragging the paper out of his pocket. "Look at that."

They were now in a cab together, going towards the town, and Mr Caldigate did not find it convenient to read the paragraph. But of course he knew the contents. "It is quite true," he said, "that the persons you allude to have been arrested, and that they are up in London. They will, I presume, be tried for perjury."

"It is true?"

"There is no doubt of it."

"And the party are splitting against each other?" asked Mr Babington, eagerly.

"Two of them have already sworn that what they swore before was false."

"Then why don't they let him out?"

"Why not, indeed?" said Mr Caldigate.

"I should have thought they wouldn't have lost a moment in such a case. They've got one of the best fellows in the world at the Home Office. His name is Brown. If you could have seen Brown I'm sure he wouldn't have let them delay a minute. The Home Office has the reputation of being so very quick."

In answer to this the Squire of Folking only shook his head. He would not even condescend to say that he had seen Brown, and certainly not to explain that Brown had seemed to him to be the most absurdly cautious and courteously dilatory man that he had ever met in his life. In Trumpington Street they parted, Mr Caldigate proceeding at once to Folking, and Mr Babington going to the office of Mr Seely the attorney. "He'll be out in a day or two," said the man of Suffolk, again shaking his brother-in-law's hand; "and do you tell him from me that I hope it won't be long before we see him at Babington. I've been true to him almost from the first, and his aunt has come over now. There is no one against him but Julia, and these are things of course which young women won't forget."

Mr Caldigate almost became genial as he accepted this assurance, telling himself that his brother magistrate was as honest as he was silly.

Mr Babington, who was well known in Cambridge, asked many questions of many persons. From Mr Seely he heard but little. Mr Seely had heard of the arrest made at Plymouth, but did not quite know what to think about it. If it was all square, then he supposed his client must after all be innocent. But this went altogether against

the grain with Mr Seely. "If it be so, Mr Babington," he said, "I shall always think the paying away of that twenty thousand pounds the greatest miracle I ever came across." Nevertheless, Mr Seely did believe that the two witnesses had been arrested on a charge of perjury.

The squire then went to the governor of the jail, who had been connected with him many years as a county magistrate. The governor had heard nothing, received no information as to his prisoner from any one in authority; but quite believed the story as to Crinkett and the woman. "Perhaps you had better not see him, Mr Babington," said the governor, "as he has heard nothing as yet of all this. It would not be right to tell him till we know what it will come to." Assenting to this, Mr Babington took his leave with the conviction on his mind that the governor was quite prepared to receive an order for the liberation of his prisoner.

He did not dare to go to Robert Bolton's office, but he did call at the bank. "We have heard nothing about it, Mr Babington," said the old clerk over the counter. But then the old clerk added in a whisper, "None of the family take to the news, sir; but everybody else seems to think there is a great deal in it. If he didn't marry her I suppose he ought to be let out."

"I should think he ought," said the squire, indignantly, as he left the bank.

Thus fortified by what he considered to be the general voice of Cambridge, he returned the same evening to Babington. Cambridge, including Mr Caldigate, had been unanimous in believing the report. And if the report were true, then, certainly, was his nephew innocent. As he thought of this, some appro-

priate idea of the injustice of the evil done to the man and to the man's wife came upon him. If such were the treatment to which he and she had been subjected,—if he, innocent, had been torn away from her and sent to the common jail, and if she, certainly innocent, had been wrongly deprived for a time of the name which he had honestly given her,—then would it not have been right to open to her the hearts and the doors at Babington during the period of her great distress? As he thought of this he was so melted by ruth that a tear came into each of his old eyes. Then he remembered the attempt which had been made to catch this man for Julia,—as to which he certainly had been innocent,—and his daughter's continued wrath. That a woman should be wrathful in such a matter was natural to him. He conceived that it behoved a woman to be weak, irascible, affectionate, irrational, and soft-hearted. When Julia would be loud in condemnation of her cousin, and would pretend to commiserate the woes of the poor wife who had been left in Australia, though he knew the source of these feelings, he could not be in the least angry with her. But that was not at all the state of his mind in reference to his son-in-law Augustus Smirkie. Sometimes, as he had heard Mr Smirkie inveigh against the enormity of bigamy and of this bigamist in particular, he had determined that some "odd-come-shortly," as he would call it, he would give the vicar of Plum-cum-Pippins a moral pat on the head which should silence him for a time. At the present moment when he got into his carriage at the station to be taken home, he was not sure whether or no he should find the vicar at Babington. Since their marriage, Mr Smirkie had spent much of his time at Babington, and seemed to

like the Babington claret. He would come about the middle of the week and return on the Saturday evening, in a manner which the squire could hardly reconcile with all that he had heard as to Mr Smirkie's exemplary conduct in his own parish. The squire was hospitality itself, and certainly would never have said a word to make his house other than pleasant to his own girl's husband. But a host expects that his corns should be respected, whereas Mr Smirkie was always treading on Mr Babington's toes. Hints had been given to him as to his personal conduct which he did not take altogether in good part. His absence from afternoon service had been alluded to, and it had been suggested to him that he ought sometimes to be more careful as to his language. He was not, therefore, ill-disposed to resent on the part of Mr Smirkie the spirit of persecution with which that gentleman seemed to regard his nephew. "Is Mr Smirkie in the house?" he asked the coachman. "He came by the 3.40, as usual," said the man. It was very much "as usual," thought the squire.

"There isn't a doubt about it," said the squire to his wife as he was dressing. "The poor fellow is as innocent as you."

"He can't be,—innocent," said aunt Polly.

"If he never married the woman whom they say he married he can't be guilty."

"I don't know about that, my dear."

"He either did marry her or he didn't, I suppose."

"I don't say he married her, but, —he did worse."

"No, he didn't," said the squire.

"That may be your way of thinking of it. According to my idea of what is right and what is wrong, he did a great deal worse."

"But if he didn't marry that woman he didn't commit bigamy when he married this one," argued he, energetically.

"Still he may have deserved all he got."

"No, he mayn't. You wouldn't punish a man for murder because he doesn't pay his debts."

"I won't have it that he's innocent," said Mrs Babington.

"Who the devil is, if you come to that?"

"You are not, or you wouldn't talk in that way. I'm not saying anything now against John. If he didn't marry the woman I suppose they'll let him out of prison, and I for one shall be willing to take him by the hand; but to say he's innocent is what I won't put up with!"

"He has sown his wild oats, and he's none the worse for that. He's as good as the rest of us, I dare say."

"Speak for yourself," said the wife. "I don't suppose you mean to tell me that in the eyes of the Creator he is as good a man as Augustus."

"Augustus be ——" The word was spoken with great energy. Mrs Babington at the moment was employed in sewing a button on the wristband of her husband's shirt, and in the start which she gave stuck the needle into his arm.

"Humphrey!" exclaimed the agitated lady.

"I beg your pardon, but not his," said the squire, rubbing the wound. "If he says a word more about John Caldigate in my presence, I shall tell him what I think about it. He has got his wife, and that ought to be enough for him."

After that they went down-stairs and dinner was at once announced. There was Mr Smirkie to give an arm to his mother-in-law. The squire took his married daughter while the other two followed. As

they crossed the hall Julia whispered her cousin's name, but her father bade her be silent for the present. "I was sure it was not true," said Mrs Smirkie.

"Then you're quite wrong," said the squire, "for it's as true as the Gospel." Then there were no more said about John Caldigate till the servants had left the room.

Mr Smirkie's general appreciation of the good things provided, did not on this occasion give the owner of them that gratification which a host should feel in the pleasures of his guests. He ate a very good dinner and took his wine with a full appreciation of its merits. Such an appetite on the part of his friends was generally much esteemed by the Squire of Babington, who was apt to press the bottle upon those who sat with him, in the old-fashioned manner. At the present moment he eyed his son-in-law's enjoyments with a feeling akin to disappointment. There was a habit at Babington with the ladies of sitting with the squire when he was the only man present till he had finished his wine, and, at Mrs Smirkie's instance, this custom was continued when she and her husband were at the house. Fires had been commenced, and when the "dinner-things had been taken away they clustered round the hearth. The squire himself sat silent in his place, out of humour, knowing that the peculiar subject would be introduced, and determined to make himself disagreeable.

"Papa, won't you bring your chair round?" said one of the girls who was next to him. Whereupon he did move his chair an inch or two.

"Did you hear anything about John?" said the other unmarried sister.

"Yes, I heard about him. You

can't help hearing about him in Cambridge now. All the world is talking about him."

"And what does all the world say?" asked Julia, flippantly. To this question her father at first made no answer. "Whatever the world may say, I cannot alter my opinion," continued Julia. "I shall never be able to look upon John Caldigate and Hester Bolton as man and wife in the sight of God."

"I might just as well take upon myself to say that I didn't look upon you and Smirkie as man and wife in the sight of God."

"Papa!" screamed the married daughter.

"Sir!" ejaculated the married son-in-law.

"My dear, that is a strange thing to say of your own child," whispered the mother.

"Most strange!" said Julia, lifting both her hands up in an agony.

"But it's true," roared the squire. "She says that, let the law say what it may, these people are not to be regarded as man and wife."

"Not by me," said Julia.

"Who are you that you are to set up a tribunal of your own? And if you judge of another couple in that way, why isn't some one to judge of you after the same fashion?"

"There is the verdict," said Mr Smirkie. "No verdict has pronounced me a bigamist."

"But it might for anything I know," said the squire, angrily. "Some woman might come up in Plum-cum-Pippins and say you had married her before your first wife."

"Papa, you are very disagreeable," said Julia.

"Why shouldn't there be a wicked lie told in one place as well as in another? There has been a wicked lie told here; and when the lie is proved to have been a lie, as plain as the nose on your face, he is to

tell me that he won't believe the young folk to be man and wife because of an untrue verdict! I say they are man and wife;—as good a man and wife as you and he;—and let me see who'll refuse to meet them as such in my house!"

Mr Smirkie had not, in truth, made the offensive remark. It had been made by Mrs Smirkie. But it had suited the squire to attribute it to the clergyman. Mr Smirkie was now put upon his mettle, and was obliged either to agree or to disagree. He would have preferred the former, had he not been somewhat in awe of his wife. As it was, he fell back upon the indiscreet assertion which his father-in-law had made some time back. "I, at any rate, sir, have not had a verdict against me."

"What does that signify?"

"A great deal, I should say. A verdict, no doubt, is human, and therefore may be wrong."

"So is a marriage human."

"I beg your pardon, sir;—a marriage is divine."

"Not if it isn't a marriage. Your marriage in our church wouldn't have been divine if you'd had another wife alive."

"Papa, I wish you wouldn't."

"But I shall. I've got to hammer it into his head somehow."

Mr Smirkie drew himself up and grinned bravely. But the squire did not care for his frowns. That last backhander at the claret-jug had determined him. "John Caldigate's marriage with his wife was not in the least interfered with by the verdict."

"It took away the lady's name from her at once," said the indignant clergyman.

"That's just what it didn't do," said the squire, rising from his chair;—"of itself it didn't affect her name at all. And now that it is shown to have been a mistaken verdict, it doesn't affect her position. The long and the short of it is this, that anybody who doesn't like to meet him and his wife as honoured guests in my house had better stay away. Do you hear that, Julia?" Then without waiting for an answer he walked out before them all into the drawing-room, and not another word was said that night about the matter. Mr Smirkie, indeed, did not utter a word on any subject, till at an early hour he wished them all good-night with dignified composure.

CHAPTER LIX.—HOW THE BIG WIGS DOUBTED.

"It's what I call an awful shame." Mr Holt and parson Bromley were standing together on the Causeway at Folking, and the former was speaking. The subject under discussion was, of course, the continued detention of John Caldigate in the county prison.

"I cannot at all understand it," said Mr Bromley.

"There's no understanding nothing about it, sir. Every man, woman, and child in the county knows as there wasn't no other

marriage, and yet they won't let un out. It's sheer spite, because he wouldn't vote for their man last 'lection."

"I hardly think that, Mr Holt."

"I'm as sure of it as I stands here," said Mr Holt, slapping his thigh. "What else 'd they keep un in for? It's just like their ways."

Mr Holt was one of a rare class, being a liberal farmer,—a Liberal, that is, in politics; as was also Mr Bromley, a Liberal among parsons,—

rara avis. The Caldigates had always been Liberal, and Mr Holt had been brought up to agree with his landlord. He was now beyond measure acerbated, because John Caldigate had not been as yet declared innocent on evidence which was altogether conclusive to himself. The Conservatives were now in power, and nothing seemed so natural to Mr Holt as that the Home Secretary should keep his landlord in jail because the Caldigates were Liberals. Mr Bromley could not quite agree to this, but he also was of opinion that a great injustice was being done. He was in the habit of seeing the young wife almost daily, and knew the havoc which hope turned into despair was making with her. Another week had now gone by since the old squire had been up in town, and nothing yet had been heard from the Secretary of State. All the world knew that Crinkett and Euphemia Smith were in custody, and still no tidings came,—yet the husband, convicted on the evidence of these perjurers, was detained in prison!

Hope deferred maketh the heart sick, and Hester's heart was very sick within her. "Why do they not tell us something?" she said, when her father-in-law vainly endeavoured to comfort her. Why not, indeed? He could only say hard things of the whole system under which the perpetration of so great a cruelty was possible, and reiterate his opinion that, in spite of that system, they must, before long, let his son go free.

The delay, in truth, was not at the Home Office. Judge Bramber could not as yet quite make up his mind. It is hoped that the reader has made up his, but the reader knows somewhat more than the judge knew. Crinkett had confessed nothing,—though a rumour

had got abroad that he intended to plead guilty. Euphemia Smith was constant in her assertion to all those who came near her, that she had positively been married to the man at Ahalala. Adamson and Anna Young were ready now to swear that all which they had sworn before was false; but it was known to the police that they had quarrelled bitterly as to the division of the spoil ever since the money had been paid to the ring-leaders. It was known that Anna Young had succeeded in getting nothing from the other woman, and that the man had unwillingly accepted his small share, fearing that otherwise he might get nothing. They were not trustworthy witnesses, and it was very doubtful whether the other two could be convicted on their evidence. The judge, as he turned it all over in his mind, was by no means sure that the verdict was a mistaken verdict. It was at any rate a verdict. It was a decision constitutionally arrived at from a jury. This sending back of the matter to him hardly was constitutional.

It was abhorrent to his nature, —not that a guilty man should escape, which he knew to be an affair occurring every day,—but that a guilty man, who had been found to be guilty, should creep back through the meshes of the law. He knew how many chances were given by the practice of British courts to an offender on his trial, and he was quite in favour of those chances. He would be urgent in telling a jury to give the prisoner the benefit of a doubt. But when the transgressor, with all those loopholes stopped, stood before him convicted, then he felt a delight in the tightness of the grip with which he held the wretch, and would tell himself that the world in which he lived

was not as yet all astray, in that a guilty man could still be made to endure the proper reward of his guilt.

It was with him as when a hunter has hunted a fox after the approved laws of venery. There have been a dozen ways of killing the animal of which he has scorned to avail himself. He has been careful to let him break from his covert, regarding all who would stop him as enemies to himself. It has been a point of honour with him that the animal should suffer no undue impediment. Any ill-treatment shown to the favoured one in his course, is an injury done to the hunter himself. Let no man head the fox, let no man strive to drive him back upon the hounds. Let all be done by hunting law,—in accordance with those laws which give so many chances of escape. But when the hounds have run into their quarry, not all the eloquence of all the gods should serve to save that doomed one's life.

So it was with Judge Bramber and a convicted prisoner. He would give the man the full benefit of every quibble of the law till he was convicted. He would be severe on witnesses, harsh to the police, apparently a very friend to the man standing at the bar,—till the time came for him to array the evidence before the jury. Then he was inexorable; and when the verdict had been once pronounced, the prisoner was but as a fox about to be thrown to the hounds.

And now there was a demand that this particular fox should be put back into his covert! The Secretary of State could put him back, if he thought fit. But in these matters there was so often a touch of cowardice. Why did not the Secretary do it without asking him? There had arisen no question of law. There was no question as to

the propriety of the verdict as found upon the evidence given at the trial. The doubt which had arisen since had come from further evidence, of which the Secretary was as well able to judge as he. No doubt the case was difficult. There had been gross misdoing on both sides. But if Caldigate had not married the woman, why had he paid twenty thousands? Why had he written those words on the envelope? There was doubt enough now, but the time for giving the prisoner the benefit of the doubt was gone. The fox had been fairly hunted, and Judge Bramber thought that he had better die.

But he hesitated;—and while he was hesitating there came to him a little reminder, a most gentle hint, in the shape of a note from the Secretary of State's private secretary. The old squire's visit to the office had not seemed to himself to be satisfactory, but he had made a friend for himself in Mr Brown. Mr Brown looked into the matter, and was of opinion that it would be well to pardon the young man. Even though there had been some jumping over a broomstick at Aha-lala, why should things not be made comfortable here at home? What harm would a pardon do to any one; whereas there were so many whom it would make happy? So he asked the Secretary whether that wasn't a hard case of young Caldigate. The Secretary whispered that it was in Bramber's hands; upon which Mr Brown observed that, if so, it was certainly hard. But the conversation was not altogether thrown away, for on that afternoon the private secretary wrote his note.

Judge Bramber when he received the note immediately burned it,—and this he did with considerable energy of action. If they would send him such cases as that, what

right had they to remind him of his duty? He was not going to allow any private secretary, or any Secretary of State, to hurry him! There was no life or death in this matter. Of what importance was it that so manifest an evil-doer as this young Caldigate should remain in prison a day or two more,—a man who had attempted to bribe four witnesses by twenty thousand pounds? It was an additional evil that such a one should have such a sum for such a purpose. But still he felt that there was a duty thrown upon him; and he sat down with all the papers before him, determined to make up his mind before he rose from his chair.

He did make up his mind, but did so at last by referring back the responsibility to the Secretary of State. "The question is one altogether of evidence," he said, "and not of law. Any clear-headed man is as able to reach a true decision as am I. It is such a question as should be left to a jury,—and would justify a trial on appeal if that were practicable. It would be well that the case should stand over till Thomas Crinkett and Euphemia Smith shall have been tried for perjury, which, as I understand, will take place at the next winter assizes. If the Secretary of State think that the delay would be too long, I would humbly suggest that he should take her Majesty's pleasure in accordance with his own opinion as to the evidence."

When that document was read at the Home Office by the few who were privileged to read it, they knew that Judge Bramber had been in a very ill humour. But there was no help for that. The judge had been asked for advice and had refused to give it; or had advised,—if his remark on that subject was to be taken for advice,—that the consideration of the matter should be

postponed for another three months. The case, if there was any case in favour of the prisoner, was not one for pardon but for such redress as might now be given for a most gross injustice. The man had been put to very great expense, and had been already in prison for ten or eleven weeks, and his further detention would be held to have been very cruel if it should appear at last that the verdict had been wrong. The public press was already using strong language on the subject, and the Secretary of State was not indifferent to the public press. Judge Bramber thoroughly despised the press,—though he would have been very angry if his 'Times' had not been ready for him at breakfast every morning. And two or three questions had already been asked in the House of Commons. The Secretary of State, with that habitual strategy, without which any Secretary of State must be held to be unfit for the position which he holds, contrived to answer the questions so as to show that, while the gentlemen who asked them were the most indiscreet of individuals, he was the most discreet of Secretaries. And he did this, though he was strongly of opinion that Judge Bramber's delay was unjustifiable. But what would be thought of a Secretary of State who would impute blame in the House of Commons to one of the judges of the land before public opinion had expressed itself so strongly on the matter as to make such expression indispensable? He did not think that he was in the least untrue in throwing blame back upon the questioners, and in implying that on the side of the Crown there had been no undue delay, though, at the moment, he was inwardly provoked at the dilatoriness of the judge.

Public opinion was expressing itself very strongly in the press.

'The Daily Tell-Tale' had a beautifully sensational article, written by their very best artist. The whole picture was drawn with a cunning hand. The young wife in her lonely house down in Cambridge, which the artist not inaptly called *The Moated Grange*! The noble, innocent, high-souled husband, eating his heart out within the bars of a county prison, and with very little else to eat! The indignant father, driven almost to madness by the wrongs done to his son and heir! Had the son not been an heir this point would have been much less touching. And then the old evidence was dissected, and the new evidence against the new culprits explained. In regard to the new culprits, the writer was very loud in expressing his purpose to say not a word against persons who were still to be tried;—but immediately upon that he went on and said a great many words against them. Assuming all that was said about them to be true, he asked whether the country would for a moment endure the idea that a man in Mr Caldigate's position should be kept in prison on the evidence of such miscreants. When he came to Bagwax and the post-marks, he explained the whole matter with almost more than accuracy. He showed that the impression could not possibly have been made till after the date it conveyed. He fell into some little error as to the fabrication of the postage-stamp in the colony, not having quite seized Bagwax's great point. But it was a most telling article. And the writer, as he turned it off at his club, and sent it down to the office of the paper, was ready to bet a five-pound note that Caldigate would be out before a week was over. The Secretary of State saw the article, and acknowledged its power. And then even the

'Slipper' turned round and cautiously expressed an opinion that the time had come for mercy.

There could be no doubt that public opinion was running very high in Caldigate's favour, and that the case had become thoroughly popular. People were again beginning to give dinner-parties in London, and at every party the matter was discussed. It was a peculiarly interesting case because the man had thrown away so large a sum of money! People like to have a nut to crack which is "uncrackable,"—a Gordian knot to undo which cannot even be cut. Nobody could understand the twenty thousand pounds. Would any man pay such a sum with the object of buying off false witnesses,—and do it in such a manner that all the facts must be brought to light when he was tried? It was said here and there that he had paid the money because he owed it;—but then it had been shown so clearly that he had not owed any one a penny! Nevertheless the men were all certain that he was not guilty, and the ladies thought that whether he were guilty or not did not matter much. He certainly ought to be released from prison.

But yet the Secretary doubted. In that unspoken but heartfelt accusation of cowardice which the judge had made against the great officer of State there had been some truth. How would it be if it should be made to appear at the approaching trial that the two reprobates, who had turned Queen's evidence against their associates, were to break down altogether in their assertions? It might possibly then become quite apparent that Caldigate had married the woman, and had committed bigamy, when he would already have been pardoned for the last three months! The pardon in that case would not do

away with the verdict,—and the pardoned man would be a convicted bigamist. What, then, would be the condition of his wife and child? If subsequent question should arise as to the boy's legitimacy, as might so probably be the case, in what light would he appear, he who had taken upon himself, on his own responsibility, to extort from her Majesty a pardon in opposition to a righteous and just verdict,—in opposition to the judge who had tried the case? He had been angry with Judge Bramber for not deciding, and was now frightened at the necessity of deciding himself.

In this emergency he sent for the gentleman who had managed the prosecution on the part of the Crown, and asked him to read up the case again. "I never was convinced of the prisoner's guilt," said the barrister.

"No!"

"It was one of those cases in which we cannot be convinced. The strongest point against him was the payment of the money. It is possible that he paid it from a Quixotic feeling of honour."

"To false witnesses, and that before the trial!" said the Secretary.

"And there may have been a hope that, in spite of what he said

himself as to their staying, they would take themselves off when they had got the money. In that way he may have persuaded himself that, as an honest man, he ought to make the payment. Then as to the witnesses, there can be little doubt that they were willing to lie. Even if their main story were true, they were lying as to details."

"Then you would advise a pardon?"

"I think so," said the barrister, who was not responsible for his advice.

"Without waiting for the other trial?"

"If the perjury be then proved,—or even so nearly proved as to satisfy the outside world,—the man's detention will be thought to have been a hardship." The Secretary of State thanked the barrister and let him go. He then went down to the House, and amidst the turmoil of a strong party conflict at last made up his mind. It was unjust that such responsibility should be thrown upon any one person. There ought to be some Court of Appeal for such cases. He was sure of that now. But at last he made up his mind. Early on the next morning the Queen should be advised to allow John Caldigate to go free.

THE PATHANS OF THE NORTH-WEST FRONTIER OF INDIA.

[SINCE we received the MS. of this paper we have met with the following paragraph about the writer in the Indian correspondence of the 'Times.'—Ed. B. M.]

“Scott’s guard of twenty men from the 24th Punjab Infantry were suddenly attacked by more than 100 Afridis, who fired from the surrounding hills under cover of trees and rocks. One man being severely wounded, Scott went to his assistance, and, telling him to throw his arms round his neck, prepared to carry him off. The man, with a devotion not uncommon among the Sepoys, declined the proffered assistance, and urged Scott to save himself. Scott refused to abandon him, and took him on his shoulders. The altercation, however, caused a fatal delay. Scott ran back towards his party with the wounded man on his shoulders, but in his haste stumbled and fell. Before he could rise the Afridis were upon him, and with gleaming knives slashed and cut up the wounded man. But, though unable to save him, the gallant surveyor did not desert the Sepoy. With his revolver he killed one assailant and wounded another, keeping them all at bay till, reinforced by some of his escort, he drove them back to seek shelter behind the rocks. One Sepoy described Scott’s appearance as demoniac when, his helmet having fallen off, with bare head, and beard, face, and clothes covered with blood from the wounded man, he stood over the body, pointing his revolver at the Afridis, and calling to his escort to shoot them down. Had this brave man been a soldier, the Victoria Cross would probably have been awarded him in recognition of his gallantry. No doubt in some form or other Scott’s soldierly merit will be recognised. He fought his way back successfully to Michni, losing three killed and four wounded, he himself escaping unhurt.”]

THE proposed rectification of our north-western frontier of India, if carried out in its integrity, will bring under British jurisdiction a large and very powerful section of the Pathan or Affghan border tribes, who inhabit the wild mountain tracts that have hitherto shut in the Indian empire from the semi-civilised countries and khanates of Central Asia—a borderland of unquiet, where “there is no king, and every man does that which is right in his own eyes”—controlled only by the fear of bloody recompense, influenced rather than bound in social customs by the laws of the Koran.

The country of the Pathans or

Pukhtans, who speak Pukhto, extends from Gilghit, the north-western portion of the dominions of H.H. the Maharajah of Jummoo and Cashmere, in lat. $35^{\circ} 30'$, long. $74^{\circ} 30'$, in a curve about 100 miles in diameter, running west and south to the neighbourhood of Bunnoo or Edwardesabad, about lat. 33° , long. $70^{\circ} 30'$ (where they are succeeded on the border by the Belooch tribes), including the British districts of Hazara, Peshawar, Kohat, and Bunnoo—the former cis-Indus, the other three trans-Indus districts.

The Pathans inhabiting these districts were partly subjugated by the Sikhs, and came under

British sway with the rest of the Punjab when that province was annexed at the close of the second Sikh war. Each of these districts contains hills and plains; the inhabitants are of the same great family, speak the same language, and have the same characteristics as the still independent tribes beyond our frontier. More or less gradually they have accepted the peaceful order of things inaugurated under the new régime; and the number of riots, assassinations, and other savage crimes which long disgraced them, and still disgrace the independent country, have decreased, till now their inhabitants are almost as peaceful and orderly as the subject-races in any other part of India, which fact might be taken as "a promise of good things to come" for the portions that may now be included in the empire.

Much has been written for and against the theory that the Pathan clans are the descendants of the lost tribes of Israel. However this may be, when asked whence they have come originally, the Moolahs (priests) point north-westward, sometimes adding "Khoorasan." All agree that their first representatives came down with Timoor Lung (Tamerlane) or some other Central Asian conqueror as mercenaries. Wave on wave followed the first irruption, till the former inhabitants and their "Toork" rulers were either driven southward, destroyed, or amalgamated with the new-comers. They claim to have occupied these hills for from ten to fourteen generations now.

Different powerful leaders seem to have occupied particular sections of the hills, and formed with their immediate following the *nuclei* of the present larger tribal divisions, distinguished by a common name from the other great tribes.

Such are the *Oorakzais*, who in-

habit the country lying north of the Koorum Valley, north-west of Kohat; the *Afreedees*, in whose lands lie both the Kohat and Khyber Passes; the *Mohmunds*, on either side the Cabul or Nagomau river for about fifty miles of its course above its exit into the Peshawar Valley at Fort Michni, and also in a portion of that valley; the *Khaleels*, in the Peshawar Valley; the *Khuttuks* round Kohat; the *Eusufzai*, inhabiting the Swat and neighbouring valleys and British Eusufzai; the *Taunawali Swatis* and others, in Hazara. Lying amongst these are various smaller tribes, distinct from them, but generally throwing in their lot with one or other of their powerful neighbours in times of unusual excitement.

As years rolled on, these large tribes were broken up into smaller clans and sections, each following the leadership of some son or brother of the first chieftain, and their children again subdividing the heritage in the same way, till now each tribe is subdivided into numerous *Khels* or *Zais*, the subdivision still going on till each lesser valley, each collection of hamlets—nay, each hamlet—boasts its one, two, or more *Malliks* or *Khans*, each of whom commands a small party of adherents and retainers, and between whom and his rivals—generally his brothers, half-brothers, or cousins—constant causes of strife and bloodshed crop up. The principal causes of quarrel are, in the words of their own proverb, ground, gold, and women. Luckily, owing to their strict adherence to the letter of their law in this respect, *wine* is not added to the list. The first cause of domestic or social strife is often puerile in the extreme. In a moment of anger one man calls another "Kaffir"—that is, infidel

—and is either cut down on the spot, or subsequently stalked and knifed or shot. There is no court of law to appeal to; the murderer has no qualms of conscience; but it is a recognised custom amongst them that any relative of a murdered man is at liberty to murder any relative of the murderer he can lay hands on. This done, it must in its turn be revenged; so the ball rolls on, till at times whole tribes become implicated. Mercy is neither asked nor given. There are, indeed, places of refuge where a hasty murderer may escape for a time the vengeance of the avenger of blood—some shrine, some temple, at times the tower of a neighbouring chief. We may be excused for adding a well-known tale of the border here, more characteristic and explanatory than description, however vivid, can portray.

A debtor proceeding to Peshawar with some articles for sale, met a creditor who demanded the settlement of his long-overdue loan. Payment was promised after the sale of the goods, now on their way to market. The creditor demanded security, but was told he must trust the word of the debtor, who had nothing to give in pledge. "Give me this as security," said the creditor, placing his hand on the debtor's long knife, stuck as usual in his girdle or kummerbund—a deadly insult. "Take it," said the debtor, stabbing the other on the spot. He then fled, followed by relatives of the deceased. Approaching a tower, the pursued sought "refuge in Allah's name." Having inquired from the murderer whom he had killed, the chieftain of the tower replied, "You have killed my own brother; but having asked refuge in God's name, in His name I give it." Forthwith the pursued was drawn up into the tower and the pursuers sternly for-

bidden to approach. These having left the scene, the chieftain then gave the refugee half an hour's grace, swearing by Allah to slay him if after that he should be seized. The refugee made good use of the half-hour, and escaped for that occasion at least.

I have said *ground* is a fruitful source of quarrel. A piece of waste land lying long uncultivated—say between two small branches of some water-course which has been the recognised boundary between neighbouring tribes or hamlets—is eyed by some impecunious cultivator, who forthwith proceeds with a couple of bullocks and a plough to break up the soil. Some neighbour from the opposite side, seeing him, disputes the slice of earth, warns the other off, and adds a musket-shot to enforce his argument. This is probably returned, and perhaps blood shed. The matter is now taken up by friends of the rival claimants, and this leads to more bloodshedding, needing revenge. The circle of strife increases, rival villages or Khans take opposite sides, and soon the entire valley is a scene of strife. For a time the parties will content themselves with firing at any one seen on the disputed ground; but later on, raids are organised on either side, cattle lifted, hamlets and crops burned; retaliation follows, till at length a sharp sword-in-hand conflict brings matters to a climax. By this time both parties are probably tired of the contest, and are glad of some pretext to come to terms. There is no one of sufficient power to compel a cessation, no central authority to appeal to; but here religious influence steps in for good. Some neighbouring shrine holds a noted recluse, or in a neighbouring temple there is some learned Moollah. This personage is appealed to; and if, as is generally the case, he fails to satisfy

the parties, he summons all surrounding holy men, who in their turn summon the *Jirgah*, or council of elders and chiefs of the opposing clans, and a settlement is effected—one party paying a certain sum or giving a dinner in exchange for the land, or it is made neutral, and neither must approach it.

We have said above that the inhabitants of the British districts of Hazara, Peshawar, Kohat, and Bunnoo are Pathans of the same great family as their still independent brethren. The conquest of these districts was not easily, and never thoroughly, accomplished by the Sikhs. The rule of the Khalsa was one of terror. Religious fanaticism added to the natural and political hatred of the antagonistic races. Mercy was an unknown word.

The system of collecting revenue might be classed as military extortion, not only in the frontier tracts, but throughout the dominions of the great Maharajah. The Punjab was divided into *Sirdarees*. Each Sirdar kept his own army and ruled his district in his own way. When in want of funds the Maharajah paid a friendly visit, accompanied by a large body of troops, to the various Sirdars, and received from each a *nuzzer*, or present of so many thousand rupees. The Sirdars paid like friendly visits to their subordinates; these squeezed the headmen of villages, who got what they could from the landholders, the landholders from the house-holders, &c. In the frontier districts, at least, this forcible collection of revenue was never submitted to while opposition was possible.

The Sirdars first overran the districts with large armies, and after sharp fighting, placed *thannahs* and other fortified posts at various salient points. So long as the army remained in the neigh-

bourhood all was quiet; but so soon as the Sirdar was called away to suppress revolt in other directions, or oppose political intrigues at headquarters, the Pathan chieftains would fly to the hills, collect their retainers and dependants, and burst into the plains, spread fire and sword, and hem in and cut to pieces the Sikh detachments scattered over the country, after inflicting horrible insults and tortures upon them. The depredations would then be carried into neighbouring tracts, and the revolt daily gather strength—cattle, grain, girls, all that came to hand, would be carried off. The Sirdar would hastily settle his other quarrels, receive reinforcements from Lahore, and hurry back to attack the insurgents.

Then would commence a system of reprisals. Bands of marauders or beaten insurgents would be surrounded and compelled to surrender. Several would be hanged or blown from guns; the chiefs and men of influence would be crucified, flayed or burnt alive, buried alive to the neck and their heads used as targets. Whole villages would be given to the flames, males murdered, females outraged, children carried off as hostages for future good behaviour. For months this terrible state of things would continue. Every night the Pathans would shoot sentries, cut up convoys, torture and mutilate prisoners, till one or both sides were nearly starved out; then a compromise would be effected, and matters settle down till the Sirdar was again called elsewhere. How long this would have continued it is hard to say, had not the advent of British officers on the scene after the first Sikh war put an end to it. These came into the frontier tracts not as conquerors with horrible injuries to avenge, but as peacemakers and the incarnation of law and justice and mercy;

further, almost as co-religionists, for as such they were then looked on by the Mohammedans who had so long been persecuted by the to them idolatrous Sikh. War and bloodshed were prevented and revolt severely punished on the one hand, while complete toleration of the rites of the Moslem creed was permitted on the other; and the ears of the Pathans were once again gratified by the long-forbidden call to prayers in the Musjids. At the conclusion of the first Sikh war, men like Edwardes, Lawrence, Mackeson, and Abbott, were sent to settle the hitherto unruly border districts in the name of the young Maharajah Dhuleep Singh. Herbert Edwardes's 'Two Years in the Punjab' gives a vivid picture of the multifarious and onerous duties these officers had to perform, holding the burning censers between the living and the dead that the fearful plague of hatred and murder and cruelty might be stayed. So much were these officers respected and beloved by the Pathans, that when Dewan Moolraj of Mooltan raised the standard of revolt and the Sikh troops attempted to seize and murder the British officers, Lawrence was saved by the Khyberees, Edwardes led an army of Affghans to besiege Mooltan, and the chiefs of Hazara aided "Kaka (uncle) Abbott" to turn out the Sikh troops from that neighbourhood. They welcomed the British Raj, and gladly became subjects of the new government. Nor has their loyalty ever wavered; while, on the other hand, levies raised in the border villages have done much good service in the frontier wars, and heartily aided in repelling the invasions of their independent brethren.

In our present Affghan expedition we come neither as peace-makers nor yet as conquerors, and

very careful handling is needed to steer clear of the troubles that might arise from a single false move. Many of the frontier chiefs round the Khyber have joined us, and, from a shrewd knowledge of their best interests if not from affection, they will endeavour to keep the peace. But there are various sources of discord. I have said a murderer has no qualms of conscience; this is especially so if the murdered man is an idolater, or even a Christian who is shot with little more feelings of compunction than an idolater, and an idolater with no more compunction than a bear or a tiger. The slaughter of an infidel, be he Christian or Hindoo, constitutes a sure claim to the Moslem paradise and to the dignity of *Ghazi*. Besides, as the Christian and the Feringhee conqueror are identical, the shooting of a white man is looked on as a deed of daring valour though done in the most cowardly manner from behind a rock. The chief of a clan may offer safe-conduct and heartily mean to abide by his word to a European, but he always has an enemy ready to bring him into disgrace with our authorities—some brother or cousin who wishes to succeed him in the headship of the clan or in his place of honour in our durbars—or some outlaw or refugee from British territory, some deserter with bitter feelings of personal hatred against all Europeans. Awaiting an opportunity of revenge, this man may at an unguarded moment work the mischief that the Khan has done his utmost to avert; and so given are the Pathans to lying and treachery in the smallest concerns of life, that it is hard to discover whether the murder has been committed at the instigation of the man who promised safe-conduct or not. Hence the refusal of our Government to sanction individual enterprise across the border.

Of all the border tribes the *Afreedee* has ever been the most treacherous and troublesome—if not the boldest, one of the most powerful in point of numbers, and, owing to its locality, the most important at the present juncture.

Running due east from the mountains round Cabul city is a long range known as the “*Safed Koh*,” or White Mountain, dividing the valley of the Cabul river from the Koorum Valley, its summits rising to an elevation of 12,000 and 14,000 feet above the sea-level till it reaches long. $79^{\circ} 30'$, when the crest falls to 8000 feet, and spurs are thrown out eastward towards Kohat and Peshawar and the Cabul river—one range or spur continuing unbroken to the Indus opposite Attok, and dividing the Peshawar from the Kohat Valley. Among the rugged, rocky slopes of these mountains, and in the intervening valleys, live the *Afreede*s, the *Oorakzais*, and north of the *Khyber* a section of the *Mohmunds*. The valleys occupied by the *Afreede*s are known respectively as *Maidan* and *Bara*, *Bazar*, and *Khyber*, running in parallel lines almost due east and west. *Maidan* and *Bara* have not yet been visited by our troops, and few Europeans have had even a glance into them. *Tirah* comprises *Maidan*, and *Oorakzai* *Bezoti*.

The streamlets which spring from the mountain-sides at the west ends of the valleys gradually increase in breadth and volume, and combining soon form broad streams, sometimes dry and pebbly, the water sinking to several feet below the surface; at others rocky, and filled with beautifully clear water. In the upper portions these flow through open undulating ground, sometimes three to four miles in breadth, grass-covered or cultivated with wheat and barley,

broken here and there by low hills, round whose bases generally cluster the towers and homesteads of the inhabitants. Other towers stand as sentinels guarding the cave-dwellings which honeycomb the high steep banks of the water-courses. Closing in the valleys are rugged mountain-slopes, whose crests rise to 6000 and 7000 feet above sea-level, the average height of the valleys being from 3000 to 4000 feet. Sometimes these slopes are grass-covered and well wooded with stunted oaks and the wild olive; others rise in rugged, grand, scarped, fantastically-shaped rocky masses, which form a refuge for the wild goat and the *markhar*, but which offer little shelter to man and his flocks and herds. As the streams flow eastward towards the plains, the wooded or rocky mountain-slopes approach each other more and more nearly, till at length the valley has become a rugged ravine difficult to force, and still more difficult to hold—the central stream often a rushing torrent hemmed in between precipitous rocky banks. Here and there, indeed, the hills recede, leaving a narrow margin on the banks of the stream, where rich crops of rice are produced. This is especially so in the *Oorakzai* *Tirah*, where the rice cultivation is so extensive that during the hot months fever is very prevalent, as in all rice-producing valleys; and mosquitoes abound. Here and there a few fruit-trees, walnuts, and pears and peaches, and the vine, cluster round the homesteads, but scarcely in sufficient quantity for the valleys to be called fruitful.

Like other tribes, the *Afreede*s are subdivided into various clans and sections. The principal of these are the *Malekdeenkhel*, *Sepahis*, *Kukikhel*, *Kumberkhel*, and *Zakhakhel* in the valleys named above;

and the Adamkhel, divided into four smaller sections—of which the Jowaki is one—in the hills round the Kohat Pass. Although the various clans have their own special chiefs and *Jirgahs*, or councils, and are often at war one with another, they claim a common right to the soil of all the lands of the various sections, though that right is now confined to a right of way through each other's valleys, and an equal distribution of the profits accruing from the toll levied on the trade passing through the Khyber and Kohat Passes. It appears to have been long the custom amongst them, in exercise of their rights, to interchange the locations of the various sections every ten years; but this has gradually ceased, each now occupying certain limits continually. At the final distribution the Zakhakhels appear to have appropriated a strip running north and south from the Khyber to Tirah; the other sections obtaining one strip to the westward of the Zakhakhels, and another eastward, touching on British territory. The first are elevated and form the summer residence of the inhabitants—the greater number of them migrating with their families and flocks to the lower lands in the winter. Twice a-year they must pass through the Zakhakhel lands, who thus have a strong hold on them. Of all the sections the Zakhakhel are the most noted for their thieving and marauding propensities; and every frontier war has found them prepared to supply a contingent to the tribe threatened by our troops, for a consideration in money, arms, or cattle.

The four large sections of the Adamkhel long divided between them the proceeds of the traffic through the Kohat Pass, as well as the 12,000 rupees yearly paid to them by the British Government for the free use of that pass; the

other sections dividing the proceeds of the Khyber Pass trade. The money so obtained has indeed been the chief source of their wealth, a sum being paid for each camel-load of merchandise in return for a safe-conduct through the pass. The rest of their riches consists of flocks and herds—the soil of their valleys and the rugged slopes of their mountains being too poor to produce even sufficient for their wants. Another source of income since the annexation of the Punjab has been the large sale of firewood and grass in the cantonments.

Through the Kohat Pass the chief article of traffic is salt, brought from the mines of Bahadarkhel, between Kohat and Bunnoo. Through the Khyber runs most of the trade between Cabul and India: from the former country dried fruits, silk, a warm cloth made from camels' hair called *Burruk*; tobacco from Bokhara; and some hides and furs from Russian Asia. These are brought down on droves of hardy camels, which cross with ease the most difficult mountain-roads, where Indian camels would flounder about in all directions; not led in single file with strings through their noses, but driven in crowds like sheep or cattle.

On the outbreak of present hostilities with Cabul, the passage-money was one of the first subjects broached by the Afreedees, and it seems an agreement was entered into between them and our authorities, by which they agreed not to molest our convoys, or interfere with the passage of our troops through the pass; we on our part stipulating to guarantee the payment in full of their tolls, which was, we understand, settled by our paying to the Afreedees the entire sum claimed—put at a figure approaching 124,000 rupees a-year. The camel-drivers have since been of great service to us in carrying

our commissariat stores from Jumrood to Jelalabad, doing the ninety miles in four days, receiving one rupee per maund (80 lb.) carried through. The unequal distribution of the money by the Afreedees among themselves at first led to much trouble; but this has, we believe, been since rectified.

The Afreedees have never submitted to a conqueror. To the Ameer of Cabul they have permitted a kind of suzerainty over them, their chiefs paying occasional respectful visits to the Ameer, receiving from him *khilluts*, arms, and sometimes money, in return for which they considered themselves bound to supply a certain number of men in time of war. This did not, however, prevent them demanding payment from him for the safe-conduct through the Khyber of the mountain-battery which our Government presented to him some years back. They resented bitterly the occupation of Fort Ali Musjid by his troops two years ago, when his relations with us were strained and it was evident that ere long we would come to blows. This indeed was one of the chief reasons for the complacency with which the Afreedees, especially those in the Khyber, looked on our advance. The Pathans had no love for us, nor any desire for our occupation; but, fully convinced that our stay would be limited, they were quite content to see us clear the pass of the Ameer's troops.

Other causes, too, were not wanting. The principal Zakhakhel chief of the Khyber was at deadly feud with the chiefs of Bara and Bazar. The two latter joined the Ameer; the first of course joined us, and received the subsidy for the pass. This was naturally resented by the partisans of the others; and when these found leisure from the work of plundering the Ameer's troops

flying from Ali Musjid, they being joined by a few deserters from our native regiments, and outlaws of the border, commenced a series of attacks on our convoys, pickets, and sentries, which resulted in the burning of some of their villages, the two invasions of the Bazar Valley, and the blowing up of their towers; after which their grievances were attended to and arranged.

These towers are structures about 30 feet high, and the same in diameter. The first 10 feet are of solid stone structure; the upper hollow, and capable of holding fifteen or twenty men; the whole loopholed and roofed in; above the roof is a look-out balcony. The only entrance is a small doorway above the stone substructure, approached either by a ladder or a single piece of rope, which, when the tower is occupied, is drawn up. Scattered round the towers are the huts or cave-dwellings of the people. The huts, surrounded generally by low earthen walls, resemble those all over upper India — earthen walls and flat mud-covered roofs some 20 feet long, 10 or 12 broad, and 6 high. Sometimes they are longer, and divided into apartments, in one of which the cows and buffaloes are housed, though quite as often they occupy the same apartment as their owners. Their portion is generally anything but clean; the portion occupied by the family is swept out daily by the women, who, as a rule, do not only all domestic work, but a good portion of outside duty also. The only furniture consists of two or three small bedsteads covered with string, on which lie tumbled some dirty quilts or blankets; in one corner some seed-cases covered with a coating of mud, containing the grain for daily use and for the next sowing-season; a small stool or two, and some

spinning-wheels, at which the women sit when at leisure, which is seldom; a few *ghurras*, earthen vessels, holding water or butter-milk, and used as cooking-pots. In one corner, or in the centre of the room, lies a heap of ashes or a wood-fire, on which the cooking is done, the smoke of which, having no outlets, blackens walls and rafters, on which hang the warlike implements of the lords of the mansion. These consist of a match-lock or flint-lock musket—lately superseded in many Afreedee homes by the Enfield, snatched from the Ameer's panic-stricken infantry flying from Ali Musjid—a horn of powder, a bag of bullets, an old pistol or two, and the long knife, used as sword and dagger of some tribes, or the sword and shield of others. All these are worn by the men, not only when on the war-path, but almost invariably—even when ploughing in their fields. Add to this a sheepskin bag containing about 20 lb. of flour, in which are imbedded some pieces of salt and *goor* (molasses), and the Pathan is equipped for a week's campaign.

His clothing consists of a loose pair of trousers, a long coat or *chapkan*, a skull-cap on his shaven head, a waistband, and a turban—the latter often used as a sheet for clothing at night. The turban is generally fringed with gay colours; otherwise his entire clothing is dyed a deep indigo-blue, or of the dust-colour called *khaki*. On his feet are sandals, either of barely tanned leather, or made from grass or the leaves of a dwarf palm. But he is able to go about even amongst sharp rocks with bare feet. Their heads are shaven, and the ends of the moustache cut close to the upper lip, the beard and whiskers allowed to grow. The dress of the women consists of very loose trous-

ers, a jacket and sheet thrown over head and shoulders, all dyed blue. The men do the ploughing, reaping, and, when unable to secure the services of Cabuli coolies, the building. They also cut the fire-wood for daily use and for sale, but never carry it. It is taken to the villages or to market on donkeys, mules, or bullocks, driven by boys, guarded by a man or two; or carried on their heads by the women and girls. These also cut and carry in grass for sale and for the cattle, climbing over most dangerous precipices to secure it. The cattle, sheep, and goats are taken out to graze by the boys.

The Pathan, in fact, is essentially lazy, except in war and the chase. He will not do a hand's turn more than he is compelled. He loves, of all things, to sit before the musjid or the *hoojra* (guest-house) and gossip, bragging (especially the Afreedee) of his prowess, and the impenetrability of his mountain fastnesses while he is alive. The men do indeed generally build their own towers, and in characteristic fashion. The Khan summons his retainers and neighbours to the work. When all are collected, after much talking and eating the work is begun; at noon they eat and smoke and talk—always talk—then build again to sundown; then set to eating and talking again. The Khan feeds all who are engaged in the work till it is finished, when he gives a grand feast, adding perhaps a few sheep; so that, one way and another, each tower costs between two and three hundred rupees.

When not fighting or hunting, the Pathan goes about with bent head, in long slouching strides, fancying himself a wonderful being.

Although his conversation at times turns on history (if it can be called such), politics, and religion,

the Pathan is excessively ignorant. A few youths learn to read the Koran, and recite long passages from it, and sometimes from other Eastern writings; but these at once set up as Moollahs or priests. There is no hierarchy or regular priesthood. Every man who can read the Koran is considered capable of leading the prayers in the musjids, and even of becoming a regular priest, though these places are generally reserved for the Syuds—descended or supposed to be descended from the Prophet, or at least from the family of the Koreish, who take the place of the Levites among the Jews. The great bulk of the Pathans are of the orthodox or Sunni sect—the same as the Turks, Arabians, and most Indian Mohammedans, in distinction from the Shiah—chiefly Persians—and the Wahabis, a comparatively new sect, who may be looked on as the Covenanters of the Moslem world for fanaticism, who, however, refuse all belief in prophets, angels, saints, shrines, &c., and consider themselves bound to struggle against all earthly sovereigns who are not of their own sect. These are looked on as dangerous heretics by the orthodox. Though a fanatic in religion, the Pathan has but a poor knowledge of what his religion is. He repeats the cry that “God is God, and Mahomed is His prophet,” with great earnestness. He gives tithes to the priest. He keeps the stated fasts of the Moharram—not even smoking from sunrise to sunset during the thirty days, making up for his daily abstinence by indulging more than usual in food and tobacco at night. He will not mention the name pig, nor drink wine. His laws of inheritance are those propounded to him by his priest from the Koran. But except the Moollahs—some of whom are learned in religious polemics—none

can read or write, and they have no general knowledge. Strict deists in theory, and taught by the first principles of their creed to abhor anything likely to detract from the oneness of deity, they are, like all mountaineers, very superstitious.

The divs, djinns, and fairies of all Mohammedan literature are of course objects of faith, though not of sight. Their superstitious fancies content themselves with the invocation of saints, pilgrimages to *ziarats* or shrines, or *takias*—the former being the burial-places, the latter resting-spots in their wanderings—of holy men. Here prayers are offered to God, and the intercession of saints requested for their prayers, the objects of which are invariably material, not spiritual—the request for a son, cure from illness, death of enemies, riches for themselves, never an increase of purity, or holiness, or help in a heavenward path. For, unlike the trembling Christian, with a morbid idea of his extreme sinfulness, taught to think that heaven is to be the reward of a few chosen ones, and begging to be included, the Pathan looks on himself as secure for all eternity because he is a Mohammedan. In controversy recognising some intermediate state akin to the purgatory of the early Churches—where punishment for offences against other Mohammedans is meted out—he yet feels individually secure. Repentance, redemption, purity, humility, the great watchwords of the Christian, are unknown to the Pathan either in precept or practice. Miracles performed at shrines are commonly reported and believed amongst them, always as frivolous and useless to mankind as most modern instances of these impositions.

In the heart of Peshawar—perhaps the vilest city in Asia—has long been established a Christian

mission, whose members have gained a hold on the affections of the brutal mob around them by their devotion to the sick in times of cholera and other pestilence. But they make few converts. When they do so, however, it is generally from among the more intelligent classes—men who have gone through the usual phases of thought; first, from Mohammedanism to simpler deism (that is, rejecting shrines, miracles, &c.); then atheism, or something like it; next Christianity, the last phase being long delayed. During the intermediate stages they are very candid and open in their opinions, contemptuous in their references to the superstitions around them. A story is told of one of these men in his transition stage. Crossing the Indus with a boat-load of others at Attok during the monsoon, a storm burst on them. The others cried to various saints for help. "What is the good of calling on dead saints?" said our friend. "Why not call on me, who am a living Syud, or on some living man who might hear you?" Saying this, he turned towards Eusufzai, and horrified his listeners by shouting louder than all the rest, "O Lumsden Sahib Bahadar, save me! O Lumsden Sahib Bahadar, save me!" We are not sure if the man eventually turned Christian, but think he did.

In our native armies the Sikh, Rajput, Poorbia, and even the Goorkha, can generally read and write a little when they join, but not the Pathan. The latter are, however, very quick learners, once they begin. We certainly get the finest of their youth in our armies, and get them young and healthy. They soon form excellent soldiers, and even fair scholars. Their military air sits well on their stalwart frames. They serve with enthusiasm, though prone soon to become discontented;

and revengeful crimes are often committed by them. They easily take offence, and are very ready to quarrel and fight. The conspiracy amongst a few of them with General Robert's Koorum column, the desertion of a few of them from Sir Samuel Browne's Jelalabad force, are apt to raise the question of the advisability of using them on the border—some even going so far as to talk of excluding all Pathans from campaigns within their own country. This opinion is unjust to the great body, not only of the Pathans of Eusufzai, Hazara, &c., who have no sympathy with the Afreedees, but also with reference to the Afreedee sepoy himself. There have indeed been desertions, chiefly from among the Zakhakhels; and the deserters have perhaps done us more mischief than all others of the tribe put together. But a sepoy in the ranks would without hesitation shoot down a deserter of his own clan if he had a chance; and even, if need be, fire on his own homestead. We think, on examination, that these deserters might all be classed under the following heads, not one for political or patriotic reasons: Those who were afraid of losing their share of "pass" money paid by us; those who could not resist the temptation of joining in the plunder of the Ameer's flying army; those who had some personal grievance, real or imaginary, with their commissioned or non-commissioned native officers, or who had been disappointed in hopes of speedy promotion; some few from a knowledge that with a good rifle and seventy rounds of ammunition in hand they had the opportunity of becoming men of note in their clan, instead of being private soldiers for years to come. Soldiering in a regular army, being well disciplined, brings out the best points of the Pathan—enlarges his ideas, increases his knowledge, im-

poses self-restraint; while the pensions paid regularly to those who have served long in our ranks has begun a more friendly feeling towards us in their country. The pensioners being richer than their neighbours, obtain an influence generally used for good. They have often aided largely in bringing their tribes to terms after a conflict with our troops or before an expected one. This, unfortunately, can only be said of the higher class of pensioners. The greater number, on returning to their villages flushed with their re-obtained freedom, often burst into wild excesses and return with fresh vigour to their old restless style of life. They find a long list of scores awaiting settlement, and till this is done they can hardly look their friends in the face. Some, debauched by the life in garrison towns, bring their knowledge of vice there gained to their aid, and often the last state of that man is worse than the first.

Though a keen hand at a bargain, and very avaricious—buying and selling cattle, sheep, fowls, wood, and grass—he yet draws a line somewhere; he will not lend money on usury nor keep a shop—the former being forbidden by the Koran, the latter being considered derogatory. The callings of bankers and shopkeepers are taken up by the ubiquitous *Bunya*—called in the Punjab *Kuthrie*, among the Pathans simply *Hindoo* or *Hindko*. Each hamlet has its own *bunya*, who lives with his family—abiding by the simple rites of his father's creed, offering his prayers daily before his lamp or some other representative of the household god of his ancestors; unmolested, and generally unmolested; utterly callous to the fierce party strifes of the people among whom his fate has placed him; buying up their *ghee*, wool, goats' hair, and selling to them or exchanging for these articles

salt, tobacco, indigo, and other household commodities—with donkey or mule loads of these he goes unarmed to the farthest nooks, the most wild and secluded glens, sleeping at night under some giant tree or massive rock, drinking of the clear springs of water round him, and eating his *chappaties* contentedly; neither marrying the daughters of the Moslem nor giving his daughters to them; lending money at fabulous rates of interest to impecunious chiefs, to enable them to squander largely at their marriage festivals, or in keeping up the village *hoojras*, guest-houses, where wayfarers of the faithful can claim, and without question obtain, food and lodging for the night free of cost, giving to the villagers in exchange such scraps of news or tales as they have been able to pick up in their wanderings, inventing miracles and wonders when their stock of facts is falling short.

Ignorant as are the men, the women are if possible more so. Looked on as useful servants and necessary mothers of sons, they seldom join the evening prayers, though I have seen some doing so—never instructed in anything by the men. Permitted by their creed to have four wives, few but the chiefs can afford this luxury, as they have to pay a pretty heavy sum to the girl's father for her. A second or third wife is seldom taken by the poorer amongst them, unless no son has been born in the house. As in all Mohammedan countries, the half-brothers generally detest each other, and the division of the patrimony after the father's death causes many quarrels and much bloodshedding.

Not seldom feuds are caused by a father betrothing a girl to one suitor and taking the money for her, and afterwards making her over to a second for a larger sum. Girls are generally married before

the age of twelve; and this, together with the hard life of labour, probably accounts for their ageing and losing all pretence to beauty before thirty. Adultery is never forgiven. The Pathan has no respect and little affection for his wife; but honour, or rather self-esteem, is of more importance, and an elopement is sooner or later followed by the murder of the couple: yet elopements and abductions are common.

Though overbearing and exacting, and not slow at cruelly striking a woman, a Pathan seldom kills one except in a fit of jealousy. Yet it is not surprising that among people so little restrained, brutal murders of wives, and even of children, do occur. A noted freebooter, who for many years kept the border of Bonair in a ferment by his raids, had once been a village *lumberdar* or revenue-collector for Government. Returning from the fields one evening tired and sulky, he asked his wife for a cup of milk while she was engaged in nursing her baby. She replied that so soon as she could remove the child she would attend to his wants. Snatching the infant from her arms he dashed its head against the wall, saying her duty was to attend to him first. He had of course to fly across the border. Gathering a party of desperadoes round him, he used to go in disguise to some village in the plains, watch an opportunity, cause an alarm at one end of the village, while he snatched some rich *bunya's* child from its house at the other, and made off. The bereaved parents would shortly after be informed that on depositing a sum of money at a certain spot the child would be restored. He kept this up for some years, but at length paid with his life for his villanies.

On the approach of Englishmen, or of any man of rank likely to have the power of abduction in

their eyes, the women are hustled out of sight, but otherwise they are free to roam unveiled. A few of the richer ones, however, affect the *purdah* — that is, keep their wives closely confined. Where they have long been in contact with Englishmen, however, the fear of outrage has died out, and no restraints are imposed; but the women must not be seen by the husband in conversation with other men.

The villages in Swat Hazara and other districts are often very large; but in the Afreedee country proper, the huts are in a very small proportion to the inhabitants, most of whom live in caves, either among the rocks at mountain bases or on the banks of streams. These latter, originally hollows scooped out in the concrete by the action of water, have been enlarged sometimes to a horizontal depth of 30 feet and more, proportionately wide, and 6 or 8 feet high, sometimes divided into compartments for the cattle or separate families. Here they stow away firewood, grass, and grain. Their cattle cannot easily be carried off by marauding parties at night. They can leave the caves during the summer months for the winter residence, and *vice versâ*, without fear of finding them a mass of dust and ashes on their return, as too often is the case with huts; and while in occupation, a few towers can defend great bodies of them. Another reason for the small number of huts is the great want of timber in these valleys. There is not a single pine-tree of any species in the Khyber, nor, as far as is yet known, in any other of the Afreedee valleys: no timber of any kind. The only trees worthy of the name are stunted oaks, the wild olive, and the acacia. The "Safed-Koh" is covered with magnificent pines; but there are no wheeled conveyances, and no roads for them.

Nor is there sufficient water-carriage anywhere; for though the central streams drain large areas, the water, as I have said before, often disappears under the bed of the water-course, leaving that dry and pebbly. During the monsoon the streams become torrents for a few hours at a time; but in condition they are equally unfitted for navigation of any kind.

The cultivation of the soil is in the most primitive state, the yoke of lean oxen dragging a primitive plough, which scratches two-inch-deep furrows in the soil. No attempt is made at manuring. When ground is impoverished, it is allowed to lie fallow for some years. The rice cultivation, of course, needs more care; and no little ingenuity is at times exercised in conducting water to the desired locality.

The food of the Pathan consists of the usual *chāppati* or hand-made cake of plain flour, baked in the ashes or in a small oven at the door of the hut, some salt and *ghee* or clarified butter, and mutton. Meat of all kinds is eaten when procurable. A broken-legged or sickly bullock, if its throat can be cut with the usual prayer before its last gasp, or a stolen camel, often adds to the larder.

The chief pleasure of the Pathan is found in fighting. It is astonishing how rapidly the clansmen gather. All may be perfectly quiet in the villages; no sign of strife. Towards dusk a beacon-fire blazes up on some prominent hill-top, and shots are heard. These are responded to from the towers. Instantly every man snatches up his arms and his bag of flour, and hastens to the rendezvous; from thence to the scene of action. Two or three days are sufficient to gather thousands, all ready for a week's campaign at least. The cattle are driven by the boys; the women carry off the children and house-

hold goods to the nearest retreats in the hills. No luggage animals, no transport or commissariat officers, required. Each man carries his own food and ammunition, and at night wraps himself in his turban, or a spare sheet or blanket, and rolls close to the huge fires, or takes shelter under rock or tree, if not engaged from sunset to near sunrise in harassing the foe. If the affair is likely to last long, when there is more than one brother in the house, one goes out for a week, the other being ready to take his place next week; the same with father and son: or in cases of great emergency, all the able-bodied men join the chief, and the Davids of the family are sent in due time to inquire after their welfare, taking with them a fresh supply of *ata* (flour), and perhaps a few cheeses, not forgetting a gift for the Khan, as in the days of Jesse and Saul.

The scenes at night round the Pathan watch-fires are weirdly picturesque, even among the ragged treeless mountains of the Afreedees; still more so among the pine-clad slopes, backed with the eternal snows, in Swat and upper Hazara. On arriving at the bivouac, a sheet is laid under some giant tree for the chief; round him gather the clansmen. Some roll together huge logs, which soon form blazing masses of flame, rising high among the stately trunks of the pine-trees; some bring water to wash their feet; others knead dough into thick cakes and bake them on the ashes; while others search out the flocks of the nearest *goojurs*, the more gentle shepherds of the mountains, and secure a few goats or sheep and *ghurras* of butter-milk. The animals are soon *hulla'd* (throats cut), with the usual prayer to Allah, hacked into small pieces, these pieces skewered in rows on the iron ramrods of the muskets and held

in the flames till partly scorched. Then the pieces are torn off by ready fingers and greedily eaten in company with huge pieces of *chap-pati*, the whole washed down with great gulps of water or butter-milk. The meal done, the men circle round their fires, tell tales of murder or the chase, pass the *hookah* round and round, and smoke and talk till far into the night. Or at times the war drums and pipes strike up noisily some wild chant. A party draw their swords and take up their shields, circle round the fires, and to the beat of drum step in unison right and left, forward and backward, flashing the swords in the firelight, and strike their neighbours' shields. The music quickens; the dancers, gradually worked into phrenzy, scream and shout, leap and circle like teetotums, round and round, wilder, swifter; the echoes of the revels ring through the forests, the very trees seem to join the wild orgie,—till at length, wearied with their circling, the dancers with a long wild howl sink exhausted on the ground. Sentries are placed, quietness and darkness gather round, till at length no sound strikes the ear but the gentle “hoot-hoot” of the owl, or some distant howl of a wolf or jackal. At early dawn they are up, and after a frugal meal are again on the march; or already the flames of some surprised hamlet rise in the air, mingled with “Allah, Allah!” of the contending parties.

Some thirty times have British troops been compelled to cross the frontiers to punish now one tribe, now another, for their depredations. Occasionally a little tact might have prevented bloodshed. But more often military expeditions have not been resorted to by the authorities till every effort short of an attack in force has been made to bring the tribes to reason. The long for-

bearance of our Government has generally been taken as a sign of weakness; and sooner or later it has been found necessary to send out the troops before matters could be satisfactorily arranged.

The first punishment for a raid usually adopted is the blockade—that is, small bodies of troops, police, or levies have been stationed along the frontier opposite the offending tribe, whose members are forbidden to enter British territory. All trade with the tribe has been put a stop to, in the hope that the inconveniences and loss resulting therefrom might induce them to seek a reconciliation. But as a rule, while on one side we close their trade routes, the other three sides are open to them. They can continue to buy and sell as usual, either by intermediate transactions with their next-door neighbours or by individuals assuming for the time being the name of some adjoining tribe.

When this has failed, as is too often the case, a short military expedition through the country of the tribe has to be made—a raid, in fact. Villages and crops are burnt, cattle sometimes taken, and perhaps a few prisoners, and the troops march back again. But these have generally been failures. So long as the troops advance the Pathans retreat, merely firing from advantageous points at the column or skirmishing parties. But as soon as a retreat is begun, every man who can carry a musket follows the retiring column, and harasses it till it has left the flaming villages far behind—our loss being generally much greater than that of the enemy; and our *prestige* for a time falls visibly. Our system of raiding has indeed been very successful, especially of late under the management of Major Cavagnari. When some one particular hamlet has

offended, or when the walls of some small village *within a few hours' march of our border* have sheltered some noted outlaw, and permitted him to commit depredations in British villages, having this friendly refuge to fly to when pursued—then indeed, on some half-dozen occasions, Cavagnari has suddenly appeared in the quarters of the nearest regiment, generally the Guide Corps; has started at dusk with a few hundred cavalry or infantry; marched across country and into the hills all night; at early dawn reached and surrounded the village. At daybreak, a summons for the surrender of the criminal has been sent in. The Pathans woke up to find themselves entrapped, cried for pardon, agreed to all demands, gave up the delinquent, and accompanied the return march of the troops till British territory had again been entered. These little raids have been successful, but seldom the larger ones. A last resort has been, as in the Jowaki expedition, to collect a large force opposite the offending tribe—a force able to meet all possible opposition, well supplied with guns, ammunition, and commissariat; and bit by bit the country has been occupied and held—till the tribe, thoroughly humbled, came to terms. The Jowaki expedition was a successful affair of this stamp. The country was occupied or repeatedly overrun from November to March: then the Jowakis agreed to our modified terms. On one point, indeed, they hung out to the last, preferring rather to abandon their country, from which they had been driven, than give up the criminals

we demanded, who had taken refuge with them.

An advance into a Pathan valley will never succeed in humbling the tribe, unless the troops can remain there *as long as they please*. If it should be necessary to coerce the tribes who will become our subjects on the advancement of our frontier, some such system must be adopted; and as there are great facilities for its being done thoroughly, there is no reason why it should not be done if required. For instance, the Khyber can at any time be occupied. It is now in our hands, and might easily remain so, and with advantage. In its western portion, which is 4000 feet in elevation, a good cantonment could be formed to replace Peshawar. From Khyber to Bazar is only a few hours' journey. To reduce Bara, and subsequently Tirah, to subjection, a large force could be collected in Bazar, say 7000 men, with three months' provisions. When all was ready, the Bara Jirgahs might be summoned. If they refused to come, 5000 men could be advanced in three or four columns over the few miles lying between Bazar and the crest of the range, shutting in Bara. Here the troops would be in an impregnable position, and the Bara villages at their mercy. If necessary, more provisions could be sent up; then an advance made into Maidan or upper Afreedee Tirah; from thence into the Oorakzai Tirah. The great point would be first to place the troops on crests of ranges or in open valleys where the enemy could not attack them without heavy loss; then to keep them there till the Jirgah submitted.

THE LIFE OF THE PRINCE CONSORT.

THE extension of the 'Life of the Prince Consort' beyond the three volumes in which Mr Theodore Martin had originally intended to include the work, scarcely requires an explanation, and certainly stands in no need of an apology. We can easily understand how a life so many-sided — so full of high purposes, so eventful in wide-reaching results — must unfold itself to the earnest biographer; and how the canvas, which had at first seemed ample enough, must be enlarged and enlarged again to allow the portrait to be of life-size. It was characteristic of the Prince Consort to find in each succeeding year a wider scope for his maturing experience and increasing influence; to strike out new ways of making himself useful to the country, and of lightening the burden and responsibilities of the Crown. With each year, therefore, the biographer finds more to record — more that cannot be hurried over without a sacrifice of completeness, or omitted except at the risk of offering an imperfect presentation of that wonderful aptitude for business which, to the public, was one of the most recognisable features in the Prince's character. It is with "a crowded hour of glorious life" that the Prince Consort's biographer has to deal, and we feel that the story must come too soon to an end even when the most has been made of it. But two years now remain to be gone over, and we are pleased to dwell all the more minutely upon the period before us, in which we see the Prince crowned with the fruits of mental vigour and physical energy — pos-

sessed of the confidence of the country, which he had struggled so hard against prejudice to secure, and blessed with the affection of wife and children, of which no consort had ever proved himself to be more worthy. But even in the portion of the memoir before us, we seem to see warnings that the strain of work was telling upon an over-taxed constitution; and the occasional references which the Prince's correspondence makes at this time to stomachic ailments and nervous sufferings, although doubtless mentioned with little concern, read to us as the omens of the coming end.

It is seldom that a book has run to the same length as the 'Life of the Prince Consort,' in which the reader has been so little conscious of the author's effort. So completely has Mr Martin surrendered himself to his subject, so naturally have the Prince's life and character been made to develop themselves in his hands, that throughout the first three volumes our interest in the narrative has never been so long suspended as to leave us an opportunity of looking at the author. It is perhaps the highest compliment that we can pay to his work when we say that Mr Martin has in a great measure conquered the gossiping curiosity that attaches to the preparation of such a memoir as that of the Prince Consort, and has concentrated our whole attention on the subject. The high auspices under which the book was written, and the affectionate solicitude for a husband's memory which its primary object was to satisfy, were sure to challenge doubts as to the unity of the authorship.

It is a book in which every reader would be tempted to seek for views that would carry with them a higher authority than a biographer's conclusions, however weighty these might be of themselves, and to make out a source of inspiration in the background regulating the flow of opinion through all the course of the narrative. The skilful use which Mr Martin has made of his materials has in a great measure forestalled such inquiry. The freedom with which he has been permitted to quote from the Queen's diaries, keeps her Majesty's opinions sufficiently before us without impairing our consciousness of the biographer's responsibility. In the volume now issued we seem to have more positive assertions of the author's individuality than in any of those that preceded it. Whether it is that he is warming to his work, or that he is feeling firmer ground beneath his feet, he shows less hesitation in adding his encomium to those events in the Prince's career which have aroused his admiration, as well as less reticence in passing frank opinions upon politics and public men. The widening area in the present part of the work, and the broad issues of European policy that fall within its scope, make the duties of the biographer alternate with those of the historian, and bring the narrator into much clearer relief than he stands in the memoir parts of the book, where he is naturally overshadowed by his subject.

The interest of the present volume centres more than ever in the character of the Prince Consort, and in the family life of the Court. In the third volume, his biographer had successfully brought him through the stormy events of the Crimean war; had vindicated him from the "obloquy and misrepresentation which the Prince during that period was compelled to undergo in silence;" and had shown him

to the public as the laborious and devoted adviser of the Crown, as the jealous guardian of the honour of Britain, and as labouring night and day to lighten the load of royalty upon his Wife. There was little in the picture to give a point to political rancour, and yet there were those who could not let the occasion slip of turning the retrospect of the Prince's position to the account of party feeling. We now enter upon years tinged with less bitterness, when the Prince's public virtues were better understood and consequently more appreciated, and when his more clearly defined position as Prince Consort gave him a recognised influence at home and abroad. We rise above the wretched party cabals into which the Crown was in a great measure dragged during the Crimean period, and in which it was almost impossible for any section of the Constitution to take a creditable part. We are now better able to fix our minds, undistracted by jarring influences, upon the development of the Prince's character, and to mark the ever-broadening scope that it presents as we trace its onward progress; and we can more clearly realise the difficulties of the biographer when he pictures himself in the position of "one who, in climbing some great mountain, finds steep emerging upon steep before him, when he thinks he has neared and even gained the summit."

Mr Martin has unquestionably made the Prince Consort much better understood; he has placed his sterling virtues and exemplary life before us in that bright light in which we would all have the husband of our Sovereign to stand: but while he has fixed the Prince's reputation on an unchallengeable basis, it is still doubtful whether that position will exhibit him in the light of a popular hero. We have no reason to suppose that the

biographer has played the part of a panegyrist—in fact we know that he has meted out no more than sober justice to the Prince's lofty character; and yet our feelings hardly yield that spontaneous response that might be looked for. How is this? If we venture on a reply, our answer must be more to our own disadvantage than to that of either the Prince Consort or of his biographer. That side of the Prince's life which is turned towards the public is so free from the ordinary weaknesses of humanity, so uncheckered by any of the frailties that we are accustomed to meet with in the best of men, that the world, as it were, feels rebuked in his presence. The unswerving persistence in the path of duty, the unbending rectitude of purpose that ruled his whole conduct—to both of which Mr Martin has done no more than strict justice—seem in a manner to oppress us. The rulers whom the world love best are generally those whom it has forgiven the most; and it is quite conceivable that the Prince's memory would have been dearer to the nation, had there been a lighter side to his character by which the popular imagination could have more readily taken hold. Even a biographer is at a disadvantage in dealing with a life of which the plain record must necessarily bear the appearance of a eulogium; where he has no generous errors to apologise for, not even failings leaning to virtue's side for which he must ask the public's indulgence.

While the Prince lived, he commanded intense respect, and no small measure of admiration among her Majesty's subjects; but it would be flattery to say that he ever excited much of what is called popular enthusiasm for himself, or divided with his Wife any great share of that warm liking which has always been felt towards the Queen's per-

son. That the Prince had all the qualities which are calculated to attract warm affection, these volumes afford ample evidence; and in his devoted love for wife and children, his tenderness towards his relations, his loyalty to his early friendships, and in his praiseworthy but somewhat unpicturesque attachment to Baron Stockmar, we are sensible of a nature that might have struck the highest chords of popular enthusiasm. Of this we become more and more convinced as Mr Martin's work progresses. It was consistent, however, with the Prince's magnanimity—with that self-suppression which is so well brought out in this memoir—to wish to stand as little as he could between the throne and the people. We can easily suppose, then, that the Prince felt the duty of sacrificing a share of the popularity that a little effort on his part would have secured, rather than attract towards his own person any portion of that national affection which was due to the Queen. This, it seems to us, suggests an explanation which sets much of the Prince's public career in a clearer and more intelligible light than we have hitherto been accustomed to view it in, and which worthily completes the picture which is now set before us.

The subjects embraced in the new volume of the Prince Consort's life can scarcely stir so much party controversy as the Crimean portion of the memoirs gave rise to. The chief political events which it comprises are the Franco-Russian intrigues which landed Napoleon III. in the Italian war; the Sepoy Mutiny, and the transference of the government of India from the Company to the Crown; the peace of Villafranca and rise of the house of Savoy; and the accession of the now Emperor William to the Regency of Prussia. In domestic

policy, the volume covers the defeat of Lord Palmerston's Ministry on the Conspiracy Bill, and the short-lived Derby Administration; the measures connected with the reorganisation of India; and the renewal of the agitation for Parliamentary reform. In the domestic life of the Court, we come to the private visit of the Emperor Napoleon to Osborne, the marriage of the Princess Royal, and the Royal visit to Cherbourg; and the volume closes with the end of 1859, the last entry quoted from the Prince's diary being "We danced in the New Year." The period thus embraced is one of the busiest and most eventful in the Prince's life, when he had successfully placed himself above calumny at home, and had made his influence appreciated abroad, when his efforts to leaven the national culture with art and liberal science had begun to be duly prized, and when every measure of philanthropy and enlightenment was turning towards him as its natural promoter. A busy time for the Prince, as Mr Martin's pages testify, carrying with it a strain both mental and physical that must soon have told; carrying with it also many anxious thoughts, that we now learn for the first time, but sweetened by a domestic felicity that did not fail to give him good heart for the work.

The conclusion of the Crimean war was succeeded by good prospects of peace in Europe, darkened only by the restless spirit which Russia displayed in executing the Treaty of Paris, and by the petty obstructions which she was constantly seeking to throw in its way. The tactics employed by the Czar's Government were as nearly as possible those which it has repeated in the carrying out of the Berlin Treaty. Mr Martin's account of the position of Russia is as applicable to her

conduct at the present time as to her position after the Crimean war.

"Russia made no secret," he says, "that if she acquiesced in her present defeat, she did so only in the hope of renewing her inroads on the Ottoman empire, when her forces were sufficiently recruited to enable her to make a dead letter of the Treaty of Paris. Much might have happened in Europe before that time to make the same combination of the Western Powers impossible, before which she had for the time been compelled to succumb. She might count on the miserable Government of Turkey to falsify the promises of reform which were demanded from it when that treaty was concluded, and to be, as it had always been, the tool of the vile intrigue of which Constantinople was the centre. If only the European Powers should relapse into easy indifference as to the fulfilment by the Porte of its pledges to turn over a new leaf, and to take measures for the welfare of the races under its rule, and for a sound administration of its finances, it would never be difficult to bring up the Eastern Question at some convenient season when impatient disgust at a misrule and at an inveteracy of corruption which no warnings from within or from without could arrest, might have detached from the Ottoman Government the sympathy of every other European Power."

The keen penetration of the St Petersburg Government soon saw a prospect of the Emperor Napoleon's aims being made subservient to its interests by skillfully planned advances — "*bons procédés*." The peace had left those sanguine hopes of a rearrangement of the European treaties with which the Emperor had embarked on the war with Russia ungratified, and the military *prestige* which France had gained in the Crimea, was only fanning his desire for an enlargement of frontier. To open the Emperor's eyes to the insidiousness of Russia's motives, and to keep him true to the interests of the Anglo-French alliance,

became incumbent on the British Government; and the high regard which Napoleon entertained for the Prince's good opinion, gave the latter grounds for hoping that he would be able to intervene before France was enmeshed in the web of Russian diplomacy. Writing in April 1857, to announce the birth of the Princess Beatrice, the Prince cautions the Emperor against the effects which the proposed visit of the Grand Duke Constantine to the Tuileries might have on the mind of Europe, if not on his own plans. Napoleon, however, was not above being flattered by advances from the most conservative Government in Europe, which had hitherto treated his own position with undisguised disdain, and had refused to look upon himself personally as belonging to the brotherhood of European sovereigns. The hopes of rearrangement of territory, which Russia was not slow to hold out, were a temptation that the nephew of Buonaparte could scarcely be expected to resist. He would have preferred Austria for an ally; but Austria then, as now, was signally loyal to the Treaty, and determined to maintain the integrity of Turkey within the prescribed limits. Napoleon's mortification at the attitude of Austria was an additional incitement to respond to Russia's overtures; and the train was thus laid which was soon destined to explode in another European war. It was with the utmost caution, however, that Russia moved, and with a due regard to the state of public feeling in England. Mr Martin has deservedly emphasised a letter from Lord Clarendon to the Prince, remarking upon a rapid change which had come over the tone of the Czar's Government towards Great Britain about this time. "*From the moment,*" writes Lord Clarendon, *à propos* of this new-born

civility, "*that the result of the elections was known at St Petersburg, the change in Russian policy became apparent, and hence respect and deference were shown towards us.*" Electors would do well to note the precedent at a time when it is as incumbent upon England to have a Ministry that will show a firm front towards Russia, as it was in 1857, when Lord Palmerston was sent back to Parliament at the head of a large majority, chiefly, says Mr Martin, "because in the recent struggle with Russia, while others had lost heart, and had frequently shown more sympathy with the nation's adversaries than with the nation itself, he had never wavered." But while the temper of England thus compelled Russia to go more warily to work, she was not the less intermitting in her exertions that she kept closer in the background herself and allowed Napoleon to become the scapegoat in the eyes of European opinion.

The difference in character of the Emperor and the Prince Consort stands out very clearly in the present volume, the one serving as an admirable foil to the other. The Prince, while he seems to have had a sincere personal liking for the Emperor, perfectly understood his temperament and position. He knew that Napoleon was naturally insincere, and made still more so by the force of his situation. With a more secure hold upon France, and a juster title to reign over it, the Emperor would probably have been a better man and a better ruler; but the uncertainties amid which his life had been spent, had destroyed whatever element of caution had been originally in his character, as well as that regard for the higher political honour which alone could have made him a reliable ally. Napoleon, on his side, seems to have been sincere, at least, in his regard

for the Prince ; to have valued his political counsels, though he would not, or could not, follow them ; and to have estimated at its true value the advantage of England's friendship to his own position. When the condemnations of the English press on the Franco-Russian intrigues began to make him uneasy, he anxiously sought a private interview with the Queen in the summer of 1858, "to *éclairer* his own ideas," and to remove the "*dissidences et mésintelligences*" arising from his course of conduct. Of the remarkable interview which followed, the Prince has left a formal memorandum, now given in full, from which it would almost have been possible to forecast the fate of the Second Empire. The starting-point was the settlement of the Danubian principalities, of which the Emperor strongly advocated the Russian project of a union under one head, and urged the feeling of the people in its favour, as well as the corrupt proceedings by which he alleged that the Porte had sought to thwart the measure. The Prince met these arguments by the home question—to which he begged "an open and honest answer"—

"Do you really care for the continuance of the integrity of the Turkish Empire? This, with us, is a principle for which we have entered into the French alliance, for which we have made endless sacrifices in blood and treasure, and which we are determined to maintain with all the energy we possess.

"The Emperor said he would be open and honest. If I asked him as a private individual, he did not care for it, and could not muster up any sympathy for such a sorry set as the Turks.

"I interrupted—that I thought as much. 'But,' he added, 'if you ask me as a *homme politique*, *c'est une autre chose*.'"

The real object underlying the

Emperor's policy was soon afterwards tabled, the revision of the Treaties of 1815, which were bad, he said, and "remained as a memorial of the union of Europe against France." He had now given up the idea of touching them, he professed, but still he adhered to his conviction that the peace of Europe could never be lasting so long as it had these treaties for a basis. The ablest arguments which the Prince could offer against so dangerous a measure, the most striking warnings which he could cite from the history of Europe, failed to touch the feeling which the Emperor had upon this subject—and the "Osborne compromise," as his biographer calls it, really turned out to have been no compromise at all ; and the half-assent which the Emperor gave to the Prince's views was somewhat too hastily mistaken for agreement. It seems to have been a fixed idea of the Prince that the Emperor's chief misfortune was the want of reliable advisers, from which the Second Empire certainly suffered all along. And his parting advice took the form of a platitude, the truth of which Mr Martin rather too hastily endorses, that "no monarch had been great without having a great minister." The experience of history, as we read it, points to a conclusion that is almost exactly opposite.

Of the frequent intimacies interchanged between the Imperial and Royal families during the three years 1857-59, we have now a full record. In August 1857, the Queen and Prince Consort, with six of the Royal children, paid a private visit to the port of Cherbourg, the rapid completion of the fortifications of which, commenced in the time of Louis XIV., were causing very natural misgivings in England, and making us anxious for a counterpoise of some kind on our own coast

of the Channel. The Royal family were received with great cordiality by the garrison and town, and excited much enthusiasm among the Norman peasants as they drove about the environs. The Queen's diary gives some charming descriptions of these drives, which we would gladly have quoted had space allowed. In August of the following year the Royal party were again present at the *fêtes* on the opening of the great arsenal at Cherbourg—one of the most splendid of the many gorgeous pageants which now form the happiest memories of the Empire. The meeting was anxiously watched. France had already taken up an attitude decidedly hostile, and was encouraging the Italian patriots as well as urging on the Sardinian Government. The greater portion of the English press was very severe on the Emperor's policy, and her Majesty's Ministers had not dissembled their distrust of the devious course which he was pursuing. All these circumstances produced no small amount of awkwardness, especially when taken in connection with the fact that the English Crown must have felt somewhat in the position of "holding a candle to the devil" by aiding in the inauguration of a work that might prove a serious menace to our own interests. Both the Emperor and the Queen were quite alive to the significance which Europe would attach to the meeting, and both had good reasons for guarding their utterance. The Royal party were to dine with the Emperor on board the *Bretagne*; and the Queen's diary records that "we were both made very nervous by my poor Albert having to make a speech at this dinner in answer to one which the Emperor was going to make, and having to compose it." The Emperor, on his part, was equally anxious.

"The Emperor was not in good

spirits," writes the Queen, "and seemed sensitive about all that has been said of him in England and elsewhere. At length, dinner over, came the terrible moment of the speeches. The Emperor made an admirable one, in a powerful voice, proposing my health and those of Albert and the *famille Royale*; then, after the band had played, came the dreadful moment for my dear husband, which was terrible to me, and which I should never wish to go through again. He did it very well, though he hesitated once. I sat shaking, with my eyes *cloués sur la table*. However, the speech did very well. This over, we got up, and the Emperor in the cabin shook Albert by the hand, and we all talked of the terrible emotion which we had undergone, the Emperor himself having 'changed colour,' and the Empress having also been very nervous."

The Prince in his journal records his consciousness of "a change in the Emperor, which even his personal esteem for his visitors could not get the better of." He had already secretly committed himself to Cavour in the compact of Plombières, and had placed himself thoroughly in the power of that far-seeing statesman. The agreement then concluded was, that France was to unite with Sardinia against Austria, and to establish a kingdom of Northern Italy, receiving as her reward the cession of Savoy and Nice. The Prince Consort clearly discerned the different motives by which the Emperor was influenced, and could distinguish between what came of his own restless propensity for altering frontiers, and what he was urged into by his Northern ally. "I still think the people of Paris will shrink from a collision," writes the Prince to Baron Stockmar some months before the war broke out. "The Russians, of course, are 'at the bottom of the whole thing;' they would be able, without any outlay on their part, to avenge themselves on Austria, and

in case of things going wrong, they could leave Napoleon in the lurch, let themselves be bought off by Austria at the price of Turkish territory, and so be amply compensated for all the mishaps of the last war. Their game is simple and cleverly played, but it ought to be seen through in Paris without any great perspicacity."

The Emperor's career from this time to Sedan forms a most striking commentary on the lesson which the Prince had read him on the sanctity of treaties during his visit to Osborne. As the Prince had cautioned him, no one could foresee where the tampering with a treaty would end. The Emperor's disloyalty to the Treaty of Paris placed him in hostility to Austria, and made him play the games respectively of Russia and Sardinia, and he thus became inextricably involved in the most tortuous webs of European intrigue, from which he was only to be cut out by the sword of the German Emperor. The Prince had spoken with a frankness that is seldom permitted in diplomacy, and which the Emperor seemed to bear well. More than that, the Emperor evidently entertained for the Prince that confidence which we so often see men whose own disposition is utterly insincere yield towards those in whom they recognise and respect a superior moral nature. The Prince, however, never seems to have been led away by the complaisance with which Napoleon accepted his counsels; for, as Mr Martin says, "without sincerity, absolute sincerity in word and in act, no man, and especially no sovereign, could ever hope to command the esteem or confidence of the Prince Consort."

Throughout the Italian complication the Prince Consort maintained an attitude of strict impartiality, that in a great measure saved us

from being dragged into the controversy. He was no admirer of Austrian rule in Italy, but he was well assured that France was not the proper deliverer for an enslaved nation, and that the liberation of the Italians was a secondary object to the promotion of the Emperor's own aims. The national feeling in Italy at that time only went the length of revolution, and could not concentrate itself on the establishment of an independent government; while the extreme views of the popular leaders forbade the supposition that adequate security for the peace of Europe could result from their plans being crowned with success. In England there was a strong feeling upon the subject. Lord Palmerston was at the outset "out and out *Napoleonide*," as the Prince puts it, and if left to himself would have committed the country to an active partisanship of the Franco-Sardinian alliance. The influence of the Crown, however, was actively exerted in keeping England out of the *embroglio*; and when Lord Palmerston, disgusted beyond measure at the use to which the Emperor had turned his victories, showed a disposition to go to the opposite extreme, and quarrel with France for the readiness with which she had come to favourable terms with Austria at Villafranca, for the establishment of an Italian confederation, with the Pope at its head, we find the same wise counsels prevailing. The Cabinet was disposed to go into Congress, but the strong arguments advanced by the Court happily availed to preserve our neutral position intact. "The whole scheme," wrote the Queen to Lord John Russell, "is the often attempted one, that England should take the chestnuts out of the fire, and assume the responsibility of drawing the Emperor Napoleon from his engagements to Austria and the

Pope, whatever they may be, and of making proposals which, if they lead to war, we should be in honour bound to support by arms."

We have dwelt at some length upon the Prince's relations with the French Emperor, as set forth in Mr Martin's fourth volume, as in these his statesmanship appears to have been put to a higher test than in any other portion of his public life. His biographer does not obtrude the Prince's influence upon us, but allows us to judge for ourselves from his letters and journals of the high-minded view which he took of the duty of England with regard to the Napoleonic ideas. His allegiance towards the public law of Europe never for a minute wavered, even in the face of manifest temptations; and while his sympathies were entirely with the relief of oppressed nationalities, and with the extension of constitutional liberty, he steadily set himself against being carried away either by popular impulse or by the still more dangerous insinuations of statecraft. We need not ask to what degree his influence reached in maintaining the *prestige* which the Crown held in the councils of Europe at this juncture. The success which attended our policy at this period leaves no ground for carping at the extra-constitutional advice which piloted us through a crisis that, under rasher treatment, might readily have been made a European one. There was not a little of resemblance between the difficulties which confronted the British Government at that time and those which we had to deal with before the Treaty of Berlin; and now, as then, we seem to see the same regard for public law, the same determination to abstain from playing the game of any particular Power, actuating our policies towards a successful issue.

The Indian Mutiny and the transfer of the government to the Crown occupy a considerable portion of the present volume. Apart from the natural jealousy with which the Court viewed the Company's government, the Prince's journals show a quick perception of the difficulties with which we had to deal. No one will quarrel now with the generous views which the Queen and Prince took of Lord Canning's critical position, or find fault with her letters, which, like her more recent telegram to Lord Chelmsford, show that the sympathy of a Sovereign when her servants are in peril is not to be tied down by parliamentary red tape. When the existence of the Mutiny stood fairly revealed, the Queen pressed upon the Government "the necessity of taking a comprehensive view of our military position, instead of going on without a plan, living from hand to mouth," with such force, that Lord Palmerston told her it was fortunate for those who held different views that her Majesty was not in the House of Commons, for they would have had to encounter a formidable antagonist in argument. The Court had no great faith in the capacity of the Liberal Cabinet for dealing with such a crisis; and the Prince, writing to Baron Stockmar, remarks that "our Ministry is, however, by no means up to the mark, as little as it was in the last war, and after that experience, still more to blame." It was a difficult task to get the Palmerston Ministry to estimate the military force of the country at its true weakness, and to provide not only for strengthening our troops in the field in India, but also for maintaining our home garrisons at a time when the attention of Europe was peculiarly liable to be attracted towards their defenceless condition. "The Government," writes the Prince, "behaves

just as it did in the Crimean campaign ; is ready to let our poor little army be wasted away, and to make fine grandiose speeches, but does not move one step towards seeing that the lamp is fed with oil—consequently it must go out suddenly with a stench.” Though never doubting our ultimate success in putting down the rebellion, the Court suffered acutely during the long summer of 1857, when each mail from India brought gloomier tidings than its predecessor, until the news of the fall of Delhi afforded the first sense of relief. “Tortured by events in India, which are truly frightful,” is the description which the Prince gives of their feelings. Their apprehensions must have been all the more quickened by something like a suspicion that Russia was not altogether innocent in our Indian troubles ; for among the Prince’s papers is the assurance given by Prince Gortschakoff on 25th September to “a very distinguished person,” “*Nous ne sommes pour rien dans les malheurs des Indes*,”—a statement which, says the very distinguished person, “shows that they are.” This inference acquires considerable force from the seditious papers produced at the trial of the ex-King of Delhi, in which hopes of support and sympathy from the Russ were freely held out to encourage the disaffected. The Court was naturally prepared to hear little good of the Company’s institutions, and in the discussions which ensued, was disposed to favour any projects that would obliterate the landmarks of the moribund Government. In framing the measure which was subsequently submitted to Parliament, Lord Palmerston “courted the opinion of the Prince on many points of detail, and he was not backward in acknowledging the advantage which it derived from the

Prince’s suggestions.” But before the Liberal Ministry had made much head, it was turned out of office on the Conspiracy Bill, and a new India Bill was brought forward by Lord Derby’s Cabinet. The system of “double government” was what English politicians had been strongest in their condemnation of in the Company’s rule ; and both the Liberal and Conservative measures unconsciously proposed to aggravate the very evil which they were expected to obviate. The impossibility of Britain exercising the empire of India without a double government of some kind was fully manifest ; and we would hesitate, after close on twenty years’ experience of the new system, to say that either India or the Crown has derived substantial benefit from the substitution of the India Council for the Court of Directors and Board of Control. It is curious to go back to the India debates of 1858 and find there the germs of recent party contests that have since cropped up under very different auspices. Even in 1858 Lord Beaconsfield could see in the future an Empress of India. Writing to the Queen, Mr Disraeli, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, says of the India Bill : “It is only the ante-chamber of an imperial palace, and your Majesty would do well to consider the steps which are now necessary to influence the opinions and affect the imaginations of the Indian populations. The name of your Majesty ought to be impressed upon their daily life.” On the same page we find allusion made to a project of Mr Gladstone, which, had it been carried into effect, would have prevented our bringing Indian troops to Europe, and might have seriously impaired our position at the most critical juncture of the late Russo-Turkish difficulty:—

"One of these" (the Liberal amendments) "was a clause proposed by Mr Gladstone which, in its original form, would have deprived the Crown of the power to use the Indian forces in war, except for repelling actual invasion of her Majesty's Indian possessions or under other sudden and urgent necessity without consent of Parliament," thus depriving the Crown of one of its undoubted prerogatives. The objection to the clause on this ground was, curiously enough, strongly urged by several speakers among the advanced Liberals, but without effect. On having his attention called to it by the Queen, Lord Derby felt the gravity of the oversight, and the clause" (the 55th of the India Bill, 21 & 22 Victoria, cap. 106) "was amended by providing that, except for the purposes above-mentioned, the revenues of India should not be applied, without the consent of Parliament, to defray the expense of military operations beyond the external frontier of our Indian possessions. By this, the prerogative of the Crown and the control of Parliament were both saved."

We had always understood that the Queen herself was responsible for the Indian proclamation which announced her assumption of sovereignty, and which has since been to India almost all that Magna Charta was to the English people—the sacred guarantee of their rights and liberties as subjects of the British Crown. We now, for the first time, learn the history of this famous document. A draft was sent to the Queen, then on a visit to her daughter at Babelsberg, which did not seem to her worthy, either in letter or spirit, of so important a manifesto. "It cannot possibly remain in its present shape," was the Prince's opinion; and it was sent back to Lord Derby to be recast, with the intimation that "the Queen would be glad if Lord Derby would write it himself in his excellent language." This Lord Derby now did; but the famous toleration clauses, as well

as the concluding invocation, were directly inspired by the Queen. In the settlement of the Indian army question, the Prince Consort was less fortunate in the exercise of his influence. The Mutiny had excited in his mind a prejudice against the whole military system of the Company, while his knowledge of the Indian army organisation was not sufficiently minute to enable him to distinguish between what could be made conducive to the strength, and what had proved to be a weakness, of the Government. His views were naturally supported by the counsels of some of the most experienced of the Queen's military advisers; but time has emphatically pronounced against the policy which broke up the grand old European regiments of the Company, and saddled the three Presidencies, each with an army of field-officers, who burden the military revenue without benefiting the service. It is true, the Company's army had proved incapable of the strain to which it was subjected; but what force would not have succumbed to treason moving stealthily in its ranks? We have just reason to be proud of our Indian troops, but we pray Heaven the efficiency of our present organisation may never be tested by the same fiery ordeal as that which the Company's army went through in '57.

We have already alluded to the sympathy which both the Queen and the Prince Consort showed for the difficult position in which Lord Canning was placed. The interest taken by the Court in the other officials who were engaged in the Mutiny was not less marked. There is a delightful letter from the Queen to Sir Colin Campbell after the relief of Lucknow, every line of which shows how warmly her heart was with the gallant struggles of

her soldiers. "But Sir Colin must bear one reproof from his Queen," she writes, "and that is, that he exposes himself too much. His life is most precious; and she intreats that he will neither put himself where his noble spirit would urge him to be—foremost in danger—nor fatigue himself so as to injure his health. In this anxious wish the Prince most earnestly joins." Nothing is more noteworthy in the present volume than the hearty appreciation which good service always meets with from the Crown, or the consideration which it has shown for its officers in times of difficulty or failure. Throughout the Indian Mutiny there was a large party disposed to make Lord Canning a scapegoat, and clamouring for his removal; and it ought to be a comfort to all administrators who are placed in similarly trying circumstances to know that they have at least a sovereign who is sure to sympathise with their situation, instead of offering them up a sacrifice to popular frenzy or party necessities.

The same appreciation of good service which the Prince Consort showed for the public officers of the Crown was also observable in his regard for the domestics who had been attached to him from his earlier days. While the Queen and Prince were at Düsseldorf, on their way to visit the Princess Royal at Berlin, they received the news of the death of an old domestic. The extract from the Queen's diary which describes this incident is one of the prettiest passages in the present volume.

"While I was dressing, Albert came in, quite pale, with a telegram, saying, 'My poor Cart is dead!' ('*Mein armer Cart ist gestorben!*')" [Cart had been Prince Albert's valet for twenty-nine years.] "I turn sick now (14th August) in writing it. . . . He died suddenly on Saturday at Morges, of *angina pectoris*. I burst into tears. All day long the tears would rush

every moment to my eyes, and this dreadful reality came to throw a gloom over the long-wished-for day of meeting with our dear child. Cart was with Albert from his seventh year. He was invaluable; well-educated, thoroughly trustworthy, devoted to the Prince, the best of nurses, superior in every sense of the word, a proud, independent Swiss, who was quite *un homme de confiance*, peculiar, but extremely careful, and who might be trusted in anything. He wrote well, and copied much for us. He was the only link my loved one had about him which connected him with his childhood, the only one with whom he could talk over old times. I cannot think of my dear husband without Cart! He seemed part of himself! We were so thankful for and proud of this faithful old servant; he was such a comfort to us, and now he is gone! A sad breakfast we had indeed, Albert felt the loss so much, and we had to choke our grief down all day."

His early friends and the associations of his earlier years kept a much firmer hold on the Prince Consort than such feelings generally take of masculine minds. His correspondence with Baron Stockmar fills as large a space in the present volume as in those that preceded it. Whether it is the prejudice that naturally attaches to the position of the "political confessor," as Mr Martin very properly designates the Baron, or whether it is the fact that we are conscious throughout of the Prince rendering homage to an intellect very much beneath his own, Baron Stockmar's frequent appearances operate rather as a drag upon our interest. We can easily understand how the Prince Consort, taken away from his tutor at a time when his reverence for his knowledge and judgment was as yet unshaken by experience, would still continue to look upon the Baron's utterances as oracular; whereas, had he been more in Stockmar's company in later years, he could hardly fail to have been *désillusionné*.

Of much more genuine interest

than the political portions of the memoir are the domestic pictures in which this volume is very rich, and which stand out in tender relief amid the stern politics of Continental Europe, and the gloomy tales of mutiny and massacre from India. The marriage of the Princess Royal was the great event in the inner life of the Queen and Prince Consort embraced in this period; and its story runs through the volume with almost an idyllic tenderness. A first marriage in a family—the first surrender of a child to other ties and other affections—seldom fails to quicken paternal love; and in the case of the Princess Royal, the Queen and Prince were keenly sensible of the sacrifice they were making to secure her happiness. In no part of Mr Martin's work do we find our sympathies aroused more warmly, our feelings brought more into unison with those of the Royal family, than in these chapters; for was not the Princess Royal also the daughter of England? Excellent as the ultimate prospects of the Prussian alliance unquestionably were, it was not without present anxieties. The Prince of Prussia was as yet standing aloof from power, and viewed by the King and his Ministers with something of the jealousy that always attaches to the position of an heir-apparent. Several of Frederick William's prominent advisers were by no means enthusiastic in favour of an English Princess; and the King himself had little sympathy with those ideas of constitutional government with which in Germany the Prince Consort was very clearly identified. The Prince Consort was quite conscious that his daughter would have to depend in a great measure upon her own qualities to conciliate the affection of the German people, and he applied himself with a loving devotion to fit her for the task.

He superintended special studies designed to give her a grasp of political knowledge, and to fit her for taking part in the public life to which her husband was one day destined to be called. Very touching is the account of the last days of her maiden life spent by the Princess Royal at Balmoral:—

“‘Vicky,’ the Prince wrote to the Dowager Duchess of Coburg, ‘suffers under the feeling that every spot she visits she has to greet for the last time as home. As I look on, the *Johanna sagt euch Lebewohl!* of the “Maid of Orleans” comes frequently into my mind. It has been my lot to go through the same experiences.’”

The Queen's feelings were also severely strained as the time approached for parting with her daughter. On the day before the Court left Windsor Castle for the wedding at St James's Palace, the Queen's diary has the following entry: “Went to look at the rooms prepared for Vicky's honeymoon. Very pretty. It quite agitated me to look at them. . . . Poor, poor child! We took a short walk with Vicky, who was dreadfully upset at this real break in her life—the real separation from her childhood! She slept for the last time in the same room with Alice. . . . Now all this is cut off.”

The entries in the Queen's diaries during the bridal week are so full of true womanly feeling, so expressive of a loving mother, that we would like to reproduce the chapter at length, and we feel that we are doing but scant justice to all parties by the meagre extracts that are all our limits will allow us to quote. On Monday, January 25, 1858, the Queen writes:—

The second most eventful day in my life as regards feelings. I felt as if I were being married over again myself, only much more nervous, for I had not that blessed feeling which I had then, which raises and supports one, of giving myself up for life to him

whom I loved and worshipped—then and ever! . . . Got up, and while dressing dearest Vicky came to see me, looking well and composed, and in a fine quiet frame of mind. She had slept more soundly and better than before. This relieved me greatly. . . .”

The marriage went off under the brightest auspices, unobscured by any of the clouds that have hung over subsequent royal bridals. The Queen, though excited while the royal group was being photographed—“I trembled so, my likeness has come out indistinct”—was deeply impressed by the pageant. “The effect was very solemn and impressive as we passed through the rooms, down the staircase, and across a covered-in court.”

“Then came the bride’s procession, and our darling Flower looked very touching and lovely, with such an innocent, confident, and serious expression, her veil hanging back over her shoulders, walking between her beloved father and dearest uncle Leopold, who had been at her christening and confirmation, and was himself the widower of Princess Charlotte, heiress to the throne of this country, Albert’s and my uncle, mamma’s brother, one of the wisest kings in Europe. My last fear of being overcome vanished on seeing Vicky’s quiet, calm, and composed manner. It was beautiful to see her kneeling with Fritz, their hands joined and the train borne by the eight young ladies, who looked like a cloud of maidens hovering round her, as they knelt near her. Dearest Albert took her by the hand to give her away,—my beloved Albert (who, I saw, felt so strongly), which reminded me vividly of having in the same way proudly, tenderly, confidently, most lovingly, knelt by him on this very same spot, and having our hands joined there.”

True motherly instinct speaks here in every line, and Mr Martin has done well to make so liberal a use of the Queen’s journals at this interesting juncture. The Prince’s feelings are not less tenderly recorded. “I do not trust

myself to speak of Tuesday,” he writes, “on which day we are to lose her,” the day which the Queen said “hangs like a storm above us.” The parting, however, came and went—bitter enough, no doubt, but still supportable, as all such partings are; and presently the news from Germany of the enthusiastic reception which the newly-married couple met with, all along their route to Berlin, afforded great consolation. Prince Frederick William was able to telegraph a few days after their arrival at their new home, “The whole royal family is delighted with my wife.” The Princess’s success in the by no means easy atmosphere of the Berlin Court was remarkably rapid, and her intellectual qualities, not less than her amiability, conciliated general regard, and elicited tributes in every direction, which her father’s care has lovingly preserved. The Princess Royal now took her place among those correspondents to whom the Prince could most open his mind. His anxiety for her public appearances, for the impression which she was to make upon people, not less than for the happiness of her domestic life, partook almost of womanly gentleness. He sets himself to guide her thoughts away from the old home-life to her new duties, to warning her against the lassitude and weariness which might be expected to follow the marriage excitement and festivities, and cautions her about the necessity for apportioning time, without which she would never succeed in fulfilling the expectations that would be entertained of her. Here is a piece of sound advice, by which other brides as well as princesses might profit, and at which few husbands, even those who relish least a father-in-law’s advices, will cavil:—

“I am delighted to see, by your

letter of the 24th, that you deliberate greatly upon your budget, and I will be most happy to look through it if you will send it to me; this is the only way to have a clear idea to one's self of what one has, spends, and ought to spend. As this is a business of which I have had long and frequent experience, I will give you one rule for your guidance in it—viz., to set apart a considerable balance *pour l'imprévu*. This gentleman is the costliest of guests in life, and we shall look very blank if we have nothing to set before him. . . . Fate, accident, time, and the world, care very little for 'a previous estimate,' but ask for their due with rude impetuosity. Later retrenchments to meet them do not answer, because the demands of ordinary life have shaped themselves a good deal according to the estimates, and have thus acquired a legitimate power."

He also exerted himself to guide her reading, and recommended to her the books which had given himself the most satisfaction. Among Kingsley's works, the 'Saint's Tragedy' particularly impressed him; and he writes at length to the Princess Royal, pointing out the beautiful inner meaning that underlay the story of Elizabeth the Saint. 'Barchester Towers' was another book that the Prince read about this time.

"All novels of character," says the biographer, "had for him an irresistible charm; and none, therefore, took a greater hold upon his imagination and memory than the early masterpieces of George Eliot, with which he became acquainted a few months after this time. He revelled in her humour, and the sayings of Mrs Poyser especially were often on his lips, and quoted with an aptness which brought out their significance with added force. So highly did he think of 'Adam Bede' that he sent a copy of it to Baron Stockmar soon after it was published. 'It will amuse you,' he said in the letter sending it, 'by the fulness and variety of its studies of human character. By this study, your

favourite one,' he added, 'I find myself every day more and more attracted.'"

We have already drawn too much from Mr Martin's present volume to be able to dwell on the visit which the Queen and Prince paid to the Princess Royal at her pretty home of Babelsberg, near Potsdam, or to extract from their journals an account of the joyous reunion which then took place, the sights which they saw together, and the gratifying instances which they everywhere witnessed of the attachment that their daughter was inspiring. Nor would the reader thank us to return to internal politics, or to the Prince's views of Lord Ellenborough's unruly conduct, Lord Clanricarde's incapacity, or the rivalry between Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell for the premiership. Even the Prince's philanthropic works, his soldiers' libraries, his plans for the promotion of art and education, his presidency of the British Association—all fall flat upon us compared with the charming and natural pictures of family life with which we have just been dealing. These, and the intercourse with the French Emperor, mainly divide our interest in the present volume.

We can sincerely congratulate Mr Martin on having carried his difficult task another step nearer to a successful end. His work is one that will serve as a model for the Court biographer, while the tastes which at present govern English literature maintain their ascendancy. He has swayed to neither the side of adulation nor of detraction, nor has he shrunk from adding his honest encomium where it was due through fear of being called a flatterer. Among the many memorials by which the Prince Consort is kept in remembrance amongst us, there will be none more worthy than this memoir.

THE POLICY OF THE BUDGET.

THE country does not like heroic Budgets, unless it be in heroic times; nor does it approve of reckless financial jugglery, like that whereby Mr Lowe made a large surplus by collecting five quarters' payment of the Income-tax in a single year. In the judgment of City men and of nine-tenths of the community, the prime qualities of a good Chancellor of the Exchequer are sound common-sense, and a steady resolution not to enfeeble the policy of the Cabinet for the sake of his own departmental popularity; and these are valuable qualities in any Minister. The time has long gone by since William Pitt, acting alike as Premier and as Chancellor of the Exchequer, laid the foundations of our far-reaching colonial empire,—employing the British fleet during the great war in acquiring colonies and settlements for the British Crown, including the Cape of Good Hope and the rich sugar-islands of the Antilles,—at the same time binding them to the parent State by ties of common interest, in the shape of the “differential duties,” whereby these widespread settlements or dependencies opened their ports to British manufactures, while we opened ours to their valuable produce. That system, which was an imperial British Zollverein, has long passed away, crumbled into the dust under “Free Trade;” and now, while all of these colonies remain, in grander growth than ever, every one of them which is strong enough to do so shuts its ports against our manufactures, and treats us just as we treat them,—viz., as parts of the world at large.

Since that change was accomplished, the sphere of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's operations is entirely restricted to domestic mat-

ters. He has to keep square the national balance-sheet, without any policy towards foreign countries or our own colonies and settlements. When more money is needed, he has to say upon what tax or taxes the increase ought to be laid; when the Budget is overflowing, he has the agreeable task of choosing as to which part of our taxation is to be reduced. This latter and agreeable condition of affairs has been predominant during the last quarter of a century; yet it is marvellous to remember how many a fierce battle has been fought in Parliament even over such reductions! Whether a halfpenny should be taken off paper or a penny taken off sugar,—such-like questions have been debated and contested with as much acrimony as if the imperial fortunes of the country were at stake, and at times when the growth of the revenue was such that the question was merely which of these reductions should be taken off first. No more striking proof than these Budget-fights could be given of the rampant state of purely party spirit among us—of the excited war between the “ins and the outs.” And this year will be marked by another Budget fight, which doubtless will have come to an end before these pages are published. It has been cynically said that “the duty of her Majesty's Opposition is to *oppose* ;” and in this case there can be no doubt as to what the Opposition have to complain of. They would like the Government to make itself unpopular by imposing additional taxation; and, happily for themselves and the nation, the Government find it quite unnecessary so to do. The Opposition, of course, must be wary in their tactics. The unpopularity

which they desire to cast upon the Government would attach to themselves were they to table a resolution demanding that a penny should be added to the Income-tax or sixpence to the duty on tea. But in vehement but vague terms they will assert that the Government is destroying the national credit and imperilling the national fortunes. The country, however, will look on very placidly. People do not see why they should pay more taxes unless more money is obviously wanted; and at the worst, they know that even if the Ministerial estimates be wrong by a million sterling, a penny on the Income-tax next year would much more than cover the deficit. Why should they be called upon to pay more taxation speculatively, when, at the worst, the balance can be made straight a year hence? Such must be the sentiment even of those persons—and doubtless they are many—who have not examined the national balance-sheet; but, as we shall show, so far from the national finances having been impaired under the present Government—so far from a deficit having grown up during the current and two past years—considerably more debt has been paid off than has been incurred. The national finances will actually be in a much better state at the end of the present year than when the so-called deficit began, by the Vote of Credit for six millions, in the financial year 1877-78.

“Cowardice” is the charge brought against the Government for their present Budget. They are accused of political poltroonery and popularity-seeking because they have not augmented the revenue. Yet it has been the very courage and patriotic firmness of the Government in their past dealings with the national finances that enables them to tide over the present difficulty without augmenting the revenue at

a time when any addition to the taxation would be severely felt. The Government are now reaping the just reward of their courage in the past. Hardly had Sir Stafford Northcote become firmly seated as Chancellor of the Exchequer than he turned his attention to the National Debt, and revived, in hardly altered form, the Sinking Fund as established by Pitt,—which is really the only shape in which a systematic reduction of the National Debt can be effected. What brought the old Sinking Fund into discredit was the unbroken extraordinary expenditure for the war with France, which immediately followed Mr Pitt’s patriotic scheme; and undoubtedly the Sinking Fund can only operate beneficially when there is no long-continued extraordinary expenditure. Looking back upon the period of golden prosperity now past, but which the country enjoyed for full twenty years, one cannot but regret that the Liberal Ministries, then in office, did not revive the Sinking Fund during that singularly prosperous epoch, instead of seeking popularity by dispensing surpluses to a generation that could have well afforded to devote the yearly increment of the revenue to a reduction of the permanent Debt. Under far less favourable circumstances a Conservative Government has patriotically re-established the Sinking Fund as part of the annual Budget; and they can now appeal to the results of that policy in any discussion or review of the present financial condition of the country. This was one act of courage, of which they are now fairly reaping the benefit.

A year ago they displayed similar courage in dealing with the annual Revenue. It was indispensable to withstand the tide of Muscovite conquest in Turkey, and the Government certainly showed no “cow-

ardice" in appealing to the country on the subject by a bold increase of the taxation. The Vote of Credit for six millions represented the sum then required for extraordinary expenditure. Russia was at the very gates of Constantinople,—an unexpected peril, which it was impossible to foresee, or financially prepare for, until it actually occurred in the closing weeks of the year 1877-78; therefore, for that year, they had to meet the danger by a vote of credit. But was there any cowardice on their part when the next Budget was brought forward? The whole sum expected to be required was £6,000,000 (the whole actual expenditure has been only a trifle more), yet the Government laid on new taxation to the extent of no less than £4,350,000! The twopence added to the Income-tax was estimated to produce (and has produced) at the rate of £3,600,000; and the increase of the tobacco duty was expected to yield £750,000, although it has barely yielded £500,000. Thus, taken at the lowest, the Government a year ago met an exceptional expenditure of £6,000,000, by increasing the annual revenue by fully £4,000,000. Surely there was no want of courage then! Indeed, the addition thus made to the taxation of the kingdom was so large, compared to the exceptional expenditure which had to be met, that it might, and doubtless would, have been justly objected to, but for the possibility, then apparent to all thinking men, that the six millions might require to be largely added to. As we remarked at the time, the Government were "preparing for the worst." They did not court popularity by shirking their responsibility as leaders of the nation. They manfully faced the extraordinary expenditure to the fullest extent. And in this case the classic adage, which Lord Beaconsfield has taken as his motto

—*Fortuna favet fortibus*—has stood his Cabinet in good stead. The possible danger and expenditure which they prepared for did not come—the six millions were enough for their purpose—but new and unforeseeable troubles and expenditure have arisen in an unexpected quarter: and the Affghan and Zulu wars have unfortunately succeeded to the danger which we had to face from Russian ambition.

This exceptional or "extraordinary" expenditure, which extends over the current and two past years, is stated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer as follows: In connection with the Russo-Turkish war, £6,125,000; for the Transkei war with the Kaffirs, which began in August 1877, £592,000; for the Zulu war, £1,559,000 already expended, and a further sum, roughly estimated at £1,300,000, requisite to bring that war to a successful close,—making a total extraordinary expenditure throughout these three years of nine and a half millions sterling. As to the necessity for this expenditure there is no question. The country is unanimous on the subject. Nor is any part of this expenditure objected to by the Opposition. But the manner in which the unliquidated portion of this extraordinary expenditure is to be paid off, and the policy involved in the Ministerial plan, give to the present Budget its characteristic features: and it is to this point that we shall chiefly direct our remarks.

But, first, we must briefly show the state of the Ordinary expenditure and revenue. The figures for the past year prove once more the unusual accuracy with which Sir Stafford Northcote frames his Budget estimates. Excluding the tobacco-duty, the taxes in the aggregate have somewhat exceeded the estimate made of their productiveness; but, owing to the tobacco duty having fallen greatly short of

the estimate, there is a slight shortcoming in the total actual receipts, which have amounted to £83,116,000, or £114,000 less than the estimate made in April 1878. For the current year, the taxation remaining unaltered, the revenue is estimated at £83,055,000; and the Ordinary expenditure is fixed at £81,153,573: so that, under ordinary circumstances, there would be a surplus of nearly two millions. As regards this part of the case—viz., the amount of revenue and of Ordinary expenditure for the present year—it cannot be doubted that the estimates of the Chancellor of the Exchequer are very prudent and cautious. From the figures above given, it may be thought that the estimated diminution in the productiveness of the taxes, owing to the unfortunate depression of trade, is only £96,000; but the diminution allowed for is really much greater. Last year only five-sixths of the addition made to the Income-tax could be collected—viz., £3,000,000, out of the £3,600,000; whereas the entire addition comes into operation this year,—making an addition to the produce of the taxes to the extent of £600,000 as estimated a year ago, but which the Chancellor of the Exchequer now estimates at £520,000. This sum has to be added to the £96,000 by which the Revenue this year is estimated to fall short of its produce last year: so that the diminution in the produce of the taxes allowed for by the Chancellor of the Exchequer is really £616,000. Such an estimate of the Revenue is certainly a very moderate one, even if the present depression of trade should continue throughout the year. The estimate of the Ordinary expenditure is equally safe. It must be remembered that a year ago an unusually large addition (£1,700,000) was made to the Ordinary expenditure of the State: partly for the

sake of putting the Army and Navy on a more efficient footing, but chiefly to meet new charges for the Civil Service, the department which is the main source of increase in the national expenditure. Including the increase for this department made last year (£800,000), the charges for the Civil Service have risen no less than £3,375,000 above what they were in 1874; and there is a further increase this year to the extent of £110,000. Considering these large additions recently made, it may fairly be assumed that the Ordinary expenditure has reached its full limits for some time to come. Taking all the circumstances into account, the Budget estimates of this year, both for the revenue and for the Ordinary expenditure, may be safely relied upon; and they show, apart from the extraordinary expenditure, a sure surplus of nearly two millions—the exact sum, as estimated, being £1,900,000.

This surplus may safely be reckoned upon to cover the “extraordinary” expenditure of the present year,—which is required for settling matters with King Cetewayo, and bringing the Zulu war to a successful conclusion. How far it will do more than this cannot be determined with any certainty. The Chancellor of the Exchequer conjectures that £1,300,000 of further expenditure this year will suffice for the Zulu war; in which case there will be £600,000 available for paying a portion of the existing deficit, or unliquidated part of the past extraordinary expenditure. Anyhow, the present year’s extraordinary expenditure will be fully covered by the produce of the taxes. There is no question as to not meeting the entire expenditure, both ordinary and extraordinary, for the current year: these, we repeat, will be paid out of current revenue, besides leaving a surplus of some

kind, whether it be £600,000 or not. The sole point at issue, then—and the all-important one as regards the present Budget—relates to the paying-off of the outstanding or still unliquidated portion of the extraordinary expenditure incurred in the two previous years.

In considering this question, it must be borne in mind that this extraordinary expenditure, although belonging to two years, under any circumstances could only have been paid off, or defrayed by taxation, during the year just closed. Three and a-half millions were required unexpectedly, and had to be spent suddenly, in connection with the Russo-Turkish war, at the very close of the year 1877-78, for which no preparation could possibly have been made by taxation; yet against this extraordinary expenditure there was £860,000, which would otherwise have been a surplus, really reducing the uncovered portion of this expenditure on 31st March 1878 to £2,640,000.* Accordingly, nothing can be said against the first year of this extraordinary expenditure—viz., 1877-78. Last year, instead of starting with a surplus of £860,000, as would have been the case but for the extraordinary expenditure, began with the above-mentioned deficit, together with a known expenditure for the remainder of the six millions requisite for opposing Russia—i.e., $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions (but which proved to be £2,625,000),—making the foreseeable extraordinary liabilities for the year as nearly as may be, £5,150,000. This is the most unfavourable shape for the Government in which the case can possibly be stated: for, as a matter of fact, instead of the whole

remainder ($2\frac{1}{2}$ millions) of the Vote of Credit being included in the year's estimates, it was thought that £1,500,000 would be the outside extraordinary expenditure. But, as above stated, the total expenditure "in connection with the Russo-Turkish war" slightly exceeded the original estimate as represented by the Vote of Credit; and we do not see that the Government were justified in framing a lower estimate for this expenditure in their last year's Budget. But, even trying the Budget of 1878-79 by this severest test,—even supposing that it had been framed to meet an extraordinary expenditure of fully a million more than was actually estimated—that is, inclusive of the deficit on the previous year, £5,150,000,—the financial preparations of the Government did not err on the side of inadequacy. They imposed additional taxation, estimated to produce within the year £3,750,000 (and which actually yielded about £3,770,000†), and which in the subsequent years would produce about £600,000 more. This cannot be said to have been an inadequate preparation for the extraordinary expenditure as then known or foreseeable; nor did even the most captious critic of the Budget last year regard the Ministerial preparations as inadequate. Unfortunately, the financial arrangements of the Government were interrupted and temporarily upset by the Transkei and Zulu wars, necessitating a further extraordinary expenditure of $3\frac{1}{2}$ millions, of which sum £2,150,000 have been already spent. In this way the deficit has been raised to five millions, while its liquidation during the current

* The sum borrowed, by the issue of Exchequer bills, at the close of 1877-78 was £2,750,000, but £110,000 in cash was carried forward to the credit of the ensuing year.

† The taxes, as they stood on 31st March 1878, were estimated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to yield £79,460,000: the revenue during the past year was estimated to yield £83,230,000, or £3,770,000 as the produce of the additional taxation.

year is obstructed by the £1,300,000 which has still to be expended in bringing King Cetewayo to terms.

The existing deficit of five millions has been temporarily met by an issue of Exchequer bonds to that amount; and as no one desires that this sum should be funded, or added to the National Debt, the question is, How, or at what time, is it best for the interests of the country that these Exchequer bonds should be paid off? Upon this point the Chancellor of the Exchequer expressed his general views as follows:—

“I hold that the true principle of finance is, that you ought in ordinary years to maintain a good surplus of revenue over expenditure—sufficient not only to provide for the expenditure, but also to leave a margin for the reduction of the National Debt. I hold that you ought to make your taxation as little fluctuating as you possibly can; that you ought not to be in a hurry, when you get an accidental surplus, to give it away; and that when you have an accidental deficit, you ought not to be in a hurry to put it on taxation. I think that frequent fluctuations in our small number of taxes is very much to be deprecated. We must always bear in mind that the finance of this country now depends upon a very small number of sources of revenue, and that it is not convenient or safe either to give away revenue or to be continually putting up and down those taxes which we have still in use.

... Adding to our articles of consumption, if it is only done for a short time—say for a year or two—deranges trade and causes agitation and a great deal of disturbance without any adequate result. When you see that your revenue is permanently too low for your permanent expenditure, it is comparatively easy to add duties which will have to be kept on, and to which trade will accommodate itself. But when you have to provide for only one or two years, I think that would be inconvenient.”

Acting upon these principles or considerations, the Chancellor of the Exchequer declines to add to

the taxation, and prefers to leave the deficit to be gradually, but promptly, cleared off by the produce of the taxes now in force, and which, so far as can be foreseen, will suffice to pay off £600,000 during the current year, despite the extraordinary expenditure of £1,300,000 for bringing the Zulu war to a conclusion.

As a general proposition, the principle laid down by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the above-quoted sentences cannot be objected to—namely, that extraordinary expenditure should be treated as such, and not necessarily wiped off by an immediate imposition of more taxation, at the cost of seriously and needlessly disturbing our fiscal system. But the question is, Is this principle applicable to the present case? In considering this matter, we must take into account the condition of the country, and also the state of the national finances. Under the present lamentable depression of trade, all parties must be agreed that it would be highly injudicious and unstatesmanlike to impose fresh taxation, except under the pressure of actual necessity. And when we turn to the other element for consideration—viz., the state of the national finances, it certainly appears to us that no such necessity exists. The existing revenue, under the most cautious estimate, exceeds the Ordinary expenditure by nearly two millions,—which will yield a surplus to this amount as soon as the present extraordinary expenditure terminates (which it will do during the current year), whereby the deficit of five millions will soon be extinguished. Indeed, as already stated, some portion of the deficit will be paid off in this manner even during the current year.

But this is only one-half of the case in favour of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's proposals. Besides

the favourable condition of the Revenue, the Sinking Fund must likewise be taken into account. Contemporaneously with the extraordinary expenditure, which has occasioned a certain amount of borrowing, the Sinking Fund has been largely reducing the funded portion, or main body, of the National Debt. During the three years over which the extraordinary expenditure extends, the Funded Debt has been reduced as follows: At the beginning of the year 1877-78 the Funded Debt and Annuities stood at £761,930,913; on 31st March last it stood at £752,180,246, — a reduction of $9\frac{3}{4}$ millions. Against this has to be set the increase which has contemporaneously occurred in the Unfunded portion of the Debt, in which the Exchequer bonds are included. Two years ago (on 31st March 1877) the Unfunded Debt stood at £13,943,800, at present it stands at £25,870,100, — showing an increase of £11,926,300. Of this increase, however, £2,565,816 last year, and £3,975,064 in 1877-78, represents loans made to local bodies for public works, on which interest is paid to the Government, and which constitute no real part of the National Debt. The real increase, therefore, in the Unfunded Debt is £5,405,530: deducting which sum from the amount of the Funded Debt paid off by the Sinking Fund, we find a nett reduction of the National Debt, during these two past years of extraordinary expenditure, of £3,347,000. Further, during the present year, according to the estimates of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the surplus (£1,900,000) will suffice to complete the extraordinary expenditure, and pay off some £600,000 of the Exchequer bonds besides. But even say that the revenue this year will simply cover the whole expenditure, it

must be remembered that upwards of five millions of debt will be paid off by the Sinking Fund. And thus, during these three years of extraordinary expenditure ending on 31st March next, the debt of the country as a whole will have been reduced by about £8,500,000. In short, while meeting the entire cost of our wars and military preparations, the Government has also made a very considerable reduction of the National Debt; and the existing revenue-deficit of five millions is no addition to the Debt at all, but only a deduction from a larger sum simultaneously paid off.

It is worth noticing the circumstances under which this so-called deficit has arisen. Alike in the present and in the two previous Budgets, the Government provided taxation considerably in excess of the entire known or anticipated expenditure for the ensuing year. The deficit has arisen solely from unforeseeable events; and the anticipated surpluses in each year have largely met a very large portion of this extraordinary and unforeseen expenditure. In 1877-78, £860,000 were available from the taxation for the extraordinary expenditure of that year; last year, fully two millions (the excess of the revenue over the Ordinary expenditure) were provided from taxation for a like purpose; and in the present year, £1,900,000 from the taxation will be disposed of in the same manner. Thus, unforeseeable at the outset of each year as the whole or greater part of this extraordinary expenditure has been, no less than $4\frac{3}{4}$ millions of it will have been paid out of taxation before the present financial year terminates. Add to these $4\frac{3}{4}$ millions the *nett* reduction of the Debt contemporaneously effected by the Sinking Fund, amounting to about $8\frac{1}{2}$ millions, and it will be seen that the entire extra-

ordinary expenditure during the current and two past years, which will amount to $9\frac{1}{2}$ millions, is defrayed out of contemporaneous taxation, and some $3\frac{1}{2}$ millions besides. This, in substance, is the true position of the matter, and it shows how well the national credit, and the state of the finances, have been attended to by the present Government.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer has acted wisely and ably, and his Budget stands upon sure and strong grounds.

The "*via media*" by which he proposes to deal with the Deficit is entirely in accordance with the plan which he propounded a year ago, and to which no one at that time took objection. If this *via media* be objected to—if the Deficit were not allowed to be extinguished gradually by means of safe surpluses from the present taxation—what are the alternatives? To impose fresh taxation for this purpose, at a time when the ordinary revenue is two millions in excess of the Ordinary expenditure, would surely be a most needless, and, in the circumstances of the country, a most objectionable disturbance of our fiscal system; and in two or three years hence would produce a large surplus which would much better have remained in the pockets of the people. And why, also, this haste and irritating disturbance of the taxation at a time when, apart from the excess of revenue over Ordinary expenditure, the Sinking Fund is in operation, making each year an important reduction of the debt of the country? An increase of taxation under such circumstances would really be preposterous, and, however much the Opposition may inveigh against the Ministerial plan in general terms, we shall be astonished if any member venture to propose any addition to the present taxes.

The other alternative is to suspend the Sinking Fund. No one questions that there is no good in paying off debt with one hand while contracting an equal amount of debt with the other; and, as we have already said, it is vain to uphold a Sinking Fund under a long continuance of extraordinary expenditure. But shall we abandon the Sinking Fund merely to meet an expenditure which will terminate during the current year? After having established, and been proud of establishing, this machinery for systematically reducing the National Debt, are we to fling it away on the first slight provocation, almost as pettishly as a child flings away a toy? We do not for a moment believe that Parliament will listen to such a proposal. Let circumstances of commensurate magnitude arise, and we shall acquiesce at once in a suspension of the Sinking Fund; but we cannot see that any such circumstances at present exist, and we think that the abandonment of the recently established Sinking Fund would be not only a mistake, but a most grievous error. Were we to part with it upon such slight provocation, under what possible circumstances could we hope to see it re-established?

Hitherto we have made no mention of the temporary Loan of two millions, without interest, to the Indian Government. The Loan is to be repaid in small instalments spread over seven years, or at the rate of about £300,000 per annum, beginning next year. In some quarters it is maintained that this Loan ought to be treated as part of the actual Government expenditure, and therefore added to the Deficit. But the very form of the Loan shows that it is designed for some unusual purpose; and that purpose is, to lessen the grievous annual loss to the Indian Govern-

ment owing to the fall in the value of silver. The Indian Government is always largely indebted to the Home Government for stores and services, called the "Home Charges," and which vary in amount from ten to sixteen millions. Our Government pays for these charges in the first instance, and then repays itself by drawing bills upon India. These bills, or "Council Drafts," are payable in silver, and therefore are equivalent to silver; so that, when offered for sale in the market, they have the same effect as if ten or sixteen millions of silver were yearly added to the world's stock of that metal. In this way, and chiefly from this cause, the value of silver compared to gold has greatly fallen of late years,—producing a heavy loss to the Indian Government without the slightest advantage to the Home Government. This disastrous state of matters will be remedied in proportion as the amount of the Council Drafts is reduced, and this loan of £2,000,000 will, of course, lessen the issue of these drafts to a like amount. The remedial effect, it is true, will be small; but it is all that can be done at present, and it is worth doing. To treat the sum thus temporarily lent to India as actual expenditure is, *per se*, preposterous. But it is maintained in some quarters that this loan will never be repaid, and is not really meant to be repaid; and that it is neither more nor less than a portion of the costs of the Affghan war, which ought properly to be borne by this country; and that this view of the matter will be acknowledged by the Government as soon as it is convenient for them to do so. That this may be the issue we shall not question; but undoubtedly this is not the character of the transaction with which we have to deal, as presented in the Budget. Moreover,

even if this loan be ultimately converted into a payment to India (as we think it justly may), this will not be done until the accounts of the Affghan campaign are settled, nor, as is admitted even by the adverse critics, until this country has recovered from the present highly exceptional commercial depression.

Such, then, are the salient features and characteristic principle of the present Budget. It has undoubtedly been received with a feeling of relief and satisfaction by the public; but it cannot be expected to satisfy the Opposition, who wished to see the Government make itself unpopular by imposing fresh taxation, or those journals which had confidently assumed that additional taxation was inevitable. In some quarters it was maintained that the Income-tax must be increased—in others the spirit-duties; while the mercantile community fixed upon tea as the commodity which the Chancellor of the Exchequer would favour with his attention, and accordingly large quantities of tea were "rushed through" the Custom-house in the closing days of the financial year. The public are now well pleased to find not only that the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposes no increase of the taxation, but that there is not the least necessity for so doing. Judging from existing circumstances—which is all that a Chancellor of the Exchequer can do—the financial arrangements for the current year are perfectly adequate; while, should new events unhappily occur to prolong the extraordinary expenditure, we have a grand reserve in hand in the Sinking Fund, a suspension of which would at once add fully five millions annually to our disposable revenue. The country may be well content with such a position of the national finances.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

SOME recent criticism on public affairs has expressed the opinion, that at no time during the present century has this country had to contend against such a combination of troubles as the last year or two have let loose. There is doubtless some exaggeration in that view; but, at all events, the strain upon this country, both at home and abroad, has been remarkably severe. There are, however, indications that that strain is passing away; and beyond that source of congratulation, it is also extremely satisfactory to note with what resolve and self-restraint it has been endured, and with what skill and good fortune the far greater strain of European war, or of prolonged complication, has been, and is being, avoided. Since the troubles in Bosnia and Herzegovina began, there has been a war in Europe of no ordinary magnitude; there has been the imminent danger of our being drawn into the struggle, and the necessity of adopting vigorous measures to insist on the adequate protection of our own interests in the resettlement of the East; there have been two wars in South Africa, another in Afghanistan, and a fourth threatened in British Burmah. At home we have had a succession of bad harvests, a winter of unprecedented length and severity, prolonged depression of trade and agriculture, an enormous fall in the price of silver, banking disasters, commercial failures, and generally reduced profits. The accounts which reach us from America point to reviving business, and possibly we may have seen the worst. It seems to us that, notwithstanding this catalogue of evils, we may easily exaggerate the gloom of the past few years, and that it is right

to bear in mind, and to invite foreign nations to observe, that as far as our home condition is concerned, pauperism has not increased, while savings-bank deposits have; though foreign trade has declined in profits, its volume has not contracted; and that, as far as the strain upon the national resources is concerned, though the public revenue no longer advances by leaps and bounds, an additional twopence to the Income-tax will, it is calculated, in four years defray all the extraordinary expenditure incurred in a series of wars and during an almost unprecedented strain in our foreign relations. Though there has been recently a diminution of the national wealth, owing to bad harvests and other causes, the total increase during the last twenty years has been enormous; and the capacity of this country in wealth, in men, and in the material of war to endure a European struggle, has been immensely increased since the days of the Crimean expedition.

It is worth while to fix our attention occasionally on the brighter side of the picture, more especially when we recollect that the national honour, England's place in Europe and the civilised world, are staked on the due execution of the Treaty of Berlin. The whole circumstances under which that treaty was concluded, and war avoided, forbid any wavering in our resolution to have it duly carried out and faithfully performed. We pass over all the intricate details connected with the establishment of the new administration in the European provinces, and the reform of the old administration of the Asiatic provinces. Neither is it

necessary to consider the position of Cyprus, and the prospects in store for us there. Those are not the subjects which immediately press upon public attention. The questions which disturb the Cabinets of Europe and affect the success of the recent treaty are frontier questions. Are the Russians to withdraw behind the Balkans, and is Eastern Roumelia in consequence to be pacified by a mixed occupation, or by some scheme of provisional government? And, turning to the south, is Turkey to concede to the Greeks the boundary line recommended, but by no means decreed, by the Congress?

The correspondence of last January between Prince Gortschakoff and Lord Salisbury showed that considerable firmness has been necessary to insure the due execution of the treaty as regards the division between the two Bulgarias, —in other words, the establishment of the line of the Balkans as the northern frontier of the Sultan's dominions. During the occupation, Russian action has been directed to persuade the inhabitants of Eastern Roumelia that they may successfully resist the decision of the Congress. They have been placed under the Governor-general of Bulgaria; a temporary union of administration has been effected; the militias of the two Provinces have been indiscriminately mixed up. Everything was done to impede the execution of the treaty by making its arrangements an abrupt and complete transition from one system to another. That the forces at work to destroy this essential condition of the treaty have been considerable, admits of no doubt whatever. But it is equally clear that the known determination of the British Cabinet to have this frontier reserved to the Turkish empire, has rallied to the defence of the treaty influences of superior weight.

Whether the mixed occupation is eventually rendered necessary, or whether the Turkish hostility to it necessitates some other arrangement, the necessity which is imposed upon Russia, however reluctant she may be, to submit to the terms of the settlement under which she retires behind the Balkans, is clearly established. If the Turkish proposal to appoint a Bulgarian Prince of East Roumelia is sufficient to remove all difficulties, and to inspire Russian confidence in a peaceful issue, it is very evident that the advisers of the Czar are at present averse from creating any new convulsions. They are, moreover, diminishing their army of occupation, and taking steps to effect the complete withdrawal of their forces. The Powers are evidently resolved that that withdrawal shall be carried into effect; and whatever may be the cause,—whether it is that Russia is too exhausted for a fresh struggle, or that the forces prepared to insist on the due fulfilment of treaty obligations are known to be overwhelming,—it is clear that the peace of Europe will not be again disturbed. It is some guarantee of the durability of recent arrangements that the determination to carry them out is so general and persistent. The greater the reluctance exhibited by the Russians, the greater is the triumph achieved by the united will and voice of Europe. The history of the last twelve months is the history of a prolonged, patient, and determined vindication of the authority of Europe. The moral effect of the Great Powers uniting to take the settlement of the East out of the hands of the belligerents, and to establish an international jurisdiction over its terms, cannot fail to be of the highest political importance; and we hope that the steadiness with which their purpose has been effected, will prove a

guarantee of its permanent triumph. It is by force of that union that the future tranquillity of Europe will be preserved and the binding force of treaties maintained. It is an assertion which will never be forgotten that the ultimate fate of the Ottoman dominions is a European and not a Russian question. In its final determination this country can always secure, if its affairs are properly conducted, a voice potential and decisive. It is like revisiting a forgotten past to recall that only a few years ago the organised impotence of Europe was a byword and a reproach amongst nations. The Powers seemed to fold their hands whilst spoliation, violence, and oppression were enacted before their eyes. The result of recent sanguinary wars in Europe may, on the whole, have been beneficial; but that does not redeem from discredit the helplessness which permitted them. The revival of public law and international authority has been due to the resolution of Great Britain. England has in the last four years not merely forbidden a renewal of the Franco-German war; she has confined the Russo-Turkish struggle within reasonable limits, and enabled Europe to assert an authoritative jurisdiction over the causes and territories in dispute sufficient to render a further appeal to arms impossible and absurd. The reappearance of England on the stage of European events was hailed by every Power in Europe except Russia with exultation; and it has been satisfactory to observe that besides the energetic vindication of our own interests, the result of English action and energy has been to revive confidence abroad and restore a sense of public right.

The conclusion of the definitive treaty between Russia and Turkey, the gradual withdrawal of the Russian forces, and the retirement of the

British fleet from the Sea of Marmora, mark the steady progress which has been made in the execution of the Treaty of Berlin. The conclusion of the treaty was, in fact, the final settlement of peace between the Russian and Turkish empires, and marks the point at which the renewal of hostilities would seem no longer to be even within the contemplation of the belligerents. As it occurred after the somewhat recriminatory explanations between Prince Gortschakoff and Lord Salisbury in reference to the intermediate arrangements in Roumelia, it at least inspires the confident hope that whatever difficulties may yet be raised, however much they may be exaggerated by our home politicians, they will not in reality be of a character to jeopardise the continuance of peace. Those, for example, which relate to the internal pacification of the evacuated province must have been in view at the time the definitive treaty was signed, and the complete execution of the Berlin Settlement must have been at the time intended by both the signatories. Had it been otherwise, Russia would not, by concluding the definitive peace, have herself completed her obligation to withdraw her armies. In fact, that withdrawal began the moment the documents were signed, and before the treaty was ratified. Russia seemed eager to escape from a position which was both embarrassing and ruinously expensive; and it would seem in the highest degree improbable that an arrangement which has proceeded so far towards completion should even now, at the eleventh hour, break down. The political task remains of creating and organising a new State. The difficulties of that task, we all know, have not been smoothed by the Russian occupation. The

Liberal opposition at home, some of the inhabitants of the new State, the influence, perhaps the intrigues, of Russia, favour the union of the two Bulgarias, instead of that severance which was decreed by the Congress. No doubt the task which remains to be accomplished is difficult and delicate in the extreme. Whatever configuration or delimitation of these provinces had been hit upon, there would necessarily have been the objection that it was arbitrary and involved all kinds of anomalies. It is, of course, a fairly debatable point whether the one which was actually chosen was the best which was possible. But the argument in its favour is the overwhelming one that all the statesmen of Europe deemed it practicable and desirable, and agreed to accept it as the solution of a gigantic international difficulty. Protests may be raised over inconveniences and difficulties; perhaps inequalities and injustices may from time to time occur in the course of executing this deliberate project of united Europe. It may even be argued, possibly with success, that the new arrangement, though set off and adorned by the sensational assembling of Bulgarian notables, was not the best possible for either the Bulgarians or the Turks, for England or for Europe. But the one unanswerable argument is, that this project satisfied the necessities of the occasion, and has the sanction of united Europe; while any and every alternative proposal, not supported by the like sanction, reopens the whole controversy and excites fresh discord at a moment when the whole world is bent on peace if possible. Really, when one considers how, not merely British honour, but the peace of Europe, is bound up in the due execution of the Berlin Treaty, it is impossible to believe that any responsible statesman or any capable politician

would hesitate to support the Government in insisting upon that treaty being carried out "to the letter and the complete spirit." No one blames the Opposition for bringing to bear on the Treaty of Berlin the whole artillery of hostile criticism. But now that the treaty is made, and the honour of England and the peace of Europe bound up in its successful execution, to gloat over its difficulties and foment dissatisfaction with its provisions are inadmissible expedients in honourable party warfare. It may tend to improve Sir William Harcourt's political position in the eyes of provincial Liberals to indulge in all those crackling fireworks of epigram and alliteration, by which he effects nothing but a bad imitation of Mr Disraeli. The phrases of the latter statesman have sometimes stirred the whole country; those of the former are as plentiful as gooseberries, and frequently betray, as Lord John Manners puts it in the House of Commons, "that he is speaking of subjects of which he shows that he knows nothing." We recommend him to follow Mr Gladstone's most recent example, who thus explains, in a manner most honourable to himself, his recent silence on political questions. "For my part," said he in the debate on Mr Cartwright's motion relating to Greece, "I have been desirous during these last few months to avoid saying anything which would interfere with the fairest and best chances that the provisions of the Treaty of Berlin might have of taking full effect."

It is certainly not very wonderful that the boundary question between Greece and Turkey is not yet settled. On that subject the Congress came to no decision, but merely at the instance of France formulated certain "recommendatory intimations." Every one collects what a monstrous hurry

Greece was in. Before the ink was dry with which the treaty was written, the Greek Cabinet put forward its demands, and called for the mediation of the Powers almost as soon as the treaty was ratified. But Greece "can afford to wait." There are, as Lord Beaconsfield said, four or five questions as regards boundaries still under discussion; and that in which Greece is interested is not the most urgent. The settlement of one will probably forward the settlement of the other, and the Greeks must exercise that patience which the exigencies of the Powers, to whom she ought to be grateful, require. Her claims very early received attention, and the Ministers say that they have frequently been under discussion. "I myself," said Lord Beaconsfield, "do not take at all a gloomy view of the subject. I think there are modes by which a fair adjustment may be made, by which Greece may obtain that to which in all the circumstances she is entitled, and which the Porte may grant without any feeling of humiliation on its part, or without consenting to a settlement injurious to the interests of Turkey." And we have it from the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Lord John Manners on a later occasion, that negotiations are still going on between this country and those most interested in the question of the new Greek frontier; and that so far from this country being denounced in relation thereto, as Sir William Harcourt says, in Paris, and opposed by all the Governments of Europe, we are in reality acting in cordial concurrence and concert with the great Powers of Europe.

On the whole, it must be conceded that since we referred to the execution of this treaty last December, it has made steady and satisfactory progress. It is a work which bids fair to last. The provi-

sions of the treaty were not framed with a view to patch up and put out of sight a struggle which it was inconvenient to continue. The object was to reconcile the conflicting pretensions of the Powers by a permanent arrangement, and to secure its continuance by an improved administration of the subject provinces. It will undoubtedly be a great point gained for the peace of Europe and for the interests of this country if the European provinces of Turkey should turn out to be, as the result of this treaty, under the ultimate and effective control of Europe, protected alike from Turkish maladministration and Russian aggression. The introduction of Austria more nearly on the scene, the disposition of Germany to support her just pretensions, and the union which exists between this country and France, all point in that direction. But as regards the Asiatic provinces, their fate, like that of many other territories in the remoter East, will depend upon the future career of that rivalry between England and Russia which all competent observers admit, but of the true character of which, and of the true character of the political duties thereby imposed upon us, it is so necessary to form a sober and prudent estimate. Public attention has been thoroughly aroused of late to the progress of Russia in Central Asia, and to the consideration of the line of action which is in consequence forced upon this country as the rulers of India. In the discussion, now fully opened, of a problem so vast, we may expect to meet with the enunciation of extreme opinions on both sides. Our own view is, that it is well worthy of the utmost attention, and that its practical solution will in future years test the capacity, the firmness, and the statesmanlike prudence and moderation of the English people. The temper which ridicules all in-

terest in the subject as "Mervousness," is as unreasonable as the anxiety which takes alarm whenever Russia builds a railway to Orenburg or mobilises a force on the Attrek.

The considerations which recent events both in the East and in South Africa have forced upon us of immediate practical importance are these: First, we insist, as a matter of overwhelming importance to the public safety, considering its enormous interests in every quarter of the world, that the discipline of empire shall be maintained; and that whatever may be his views of policy, no dependent governor, whether he rules over India or South Africa, shall be allowed, in the absence of urgent necessity, to force the hand of the Government at home, and precipitate decisions which ought to be controlled by the exigencies of a world-wide rule. It is essential to the maintenance of a vast and complicated rule, that discipline should be maintained and observed, and that the responsibility of the Home Government should be one and indivisible. And next, with regard to that which is the most urgent of all imperial questions—viz., our relations to Russia in the East—the object should be to decide what is the ultimate goal of our policy, and the ultimate extent of our defensive operations, and to what extent does necessity for the time being compel us to advance towards it. Our empire in the East is large enough to satisfy the utmost craving of imperial ambition. We do not want to embark in any race of conquest with Russia. Our earth-hunger, at all events, if we ever had it, is satisfied. What we want is to take up from time to time the best line of defence which is available, and also to prevent any dominant position of offence, which may prove in the hands of an enemy a standing menace, falling into the

possession of Russia. We are the conservative and not the aggressive Power in the East; and while we should condemn that supineness and inaction which would bring India into peril, we should equally disapprove precipitate and hasty measures, or in fact any forward movement not shown to be necessary for ultimate purpose of defence.

The outcry against the Affghan policy of the Government has entirely died away. It is satisfactory to note that Lord Lytton has been completely under the control of the Cabinet, and that from first to last—from the first decision to come to an understanding as to Shere Ali's conduct, down to the declaration of war, and thence to a decision whether or not a march on Cabul is to take place—the Home Government is directly responsible for every step which has been taken. The Duke of Argyll himself admits that in his recent book. The discipline of the empire has at all events been maintained in the East. The only question which remains is upon what terms peace should be concluded. As to the policy of the war, even the Duke of Argyll admits the necessity of excluding Russian influence, the existence of the late Shere Ali's enmity, the impossibility of acquiescing in the Russian mission to Cabul. The results of the war hitherto have been, that Russia has withdrawn from Cabul and abandoned Shere Ali to his fate, after having embroiled him with his former ally. The moral effect throughout Central Asia of British power to suppress and chastise hostility, as compared with the meanness of Russian treachery and desertion, will no doubt be considerable. It is not merely that Affghan hostility has been crushed and a scientific frontier secured, but Russia has visibly recoiled. The moral triumph, therefore, is considerable; and as regards

the more tangible results of the war, the Prime Minister stated at the beginning of the session, and Sir Stafford Northcote reiterated it before the adjournment, that the object with which the expedition was undertaken had been practically achieved. An advance on Cabul, therefore, is not contemplated, unless Yakoob Khan or the march of events forces it upon us as a strategic necessity. We have taken possession of the three passes which hold the keys of the western frontier of India. It is no longer necessary to await an invasion in the plains of India, where history does not attest that the chances are in favour of successful resistance. We occupy a position now which commands Candahar, the pass in its rear, and the road along which invasion from Herat and the northern provinces of Persia would proceed. We also hold the Khyber Pass; and we have provided against the possibility of a more northern invasion from the line of Turkestan and the regions where General Kauffmann maintains his fussy display of power, by holding Jellalabad and the upper end of the Kurrum Valley. The exact line of frontier, whether it is to include Candahar and Jellalabad, or to be drawn so as to fall short of either or both of those strongholds, must be left to military authorities to decide. The important point to be noticed is, that not merely will there be communications with the North-west Provinces through the passes, but that a short road from England and Bombay will also have been secured. A line of railway from Sommeesnee Bay, from a point near to Kurrachee, to Quettah and Khe-lat, and even beyond it, would bring the strongholds which form the defence of India into direct and speedy communication with home.

Such a railway, which is in course of construction, will have commercial as well as strategic uses, and may tend to develop trade alike with Affghanistan and Central Asia.

It seems to us that the frontier now taken up should be limited to what is absolutely necessary for present purposes, and that as regards the future, nothing further is required than to station British officers with sufficient strength for the purposes of observation and influence at Cabul and Herat. We must take care to be forewarned, and rest content, for the present, that that is in itself to be fore-armed. It is needless and quite useless to advance to meet imaginary dangers, which a thousand chances may intervene to remove. We have plenty to do within the range of our Indian empire; and as long as we render its frontier secure with posts of observation thrown well out in advance, we shall probably have done all that this generation will be required to do, and shall also have discharged our duty to those who will come after us. The tendency of men on the spot, as well as of specialists who derive a bias from the exclusive consideration of a single subject, however vast, is to magnify the importance of their own particular views. We owe them all gratitude for their efforts to awaken and direct public attention to a subject of momentous interest; but we are not all required to yield an unhesitating assent to views which common-sense tells us are extravagant and disproportioned.

For instance, two bulky volumes have been recently sent to us written by Mr Demetrius Charles Boulger.* They contain a quantity of information which has been carefully compiled, and, what is more to the purpose, thoroughly digested,

* England and Russia in Central Asia. London: W. H. Allen & Co.

and presented to the reader in a very interesting manner, for the purpose of vigorously enforcing a policy which apparently aims at nothing less than rolling Russia backwards to the Caucasus, and beyond the Oxus; and as a means to that end, to seize Herat, arm the Turcomans, and practically administer the empire of Persia.

It would seem to us, on the first blush of it, that the continent of Asia is large enough to hold both Russia and England, and that there is ample room for both empires to pursue their destiny and accomplish whatever mission of civilisation each has in view. But there is evidently a small but decided school of opinion which believes that Russia proposes to herself no other object than the invasion of India, and that England's duty to herself requires her to thwart and countermine every step of her progress. The argument is pressed home that now is our time, that Russia shrinks from the contest, that we are strong enough to solve the Central Asian question wholly in our own favour, and that the time is ripe for "those bold measures from which timid spirits would shrink." We are ready to believe that in view of possible complications in Europe, if with no other view, the frontiers of India should be rendered as secure as military science can make them. It is of the utmost importance that our rule in India should be consolidated and secured from the pernicious influence of Russian missions and intrigues; but between that view and the theory that the keys of India lie scattered all over Western and Central Asia, from Teheran to Candahar, and from Orenburg to Balkh, there is an infinite distance. Even the most alarmist view, if we may trust Mr Boulger's representation of it, admits that if eventually we hold the Hindoo Koosh and a line of fortresses from Herat to

Faizabad, we should have a perfect frontier, strong in every essential demanded by military strategy. Thirty thousand troops, one third of them British, will, it is admitted, be all that is necessary to garrison these strongholds against the most desperate attempts that Russia would be able to make for the next century.

Under those circumstances, what necessity is there for rushing upon those bold measures from which timid spirits would shrink? The steps already taken are sufficient to concentrate English power on the further side of the mountains, and to make the sea the base of operations. That gives us quite sufficient start for the present; and if we keep our eyes open and a proper outlook, it will be quite impossible for us to be taken off our guard by the utmost efforts of Russia. We presume that no English Ministry would dream of allowing Herat to be taken by a Russian *coup de main*; and Lord Derby himself, if we remember right, emphatically warned the Russian Government that we should not view with indifference any aggression upon Merv. Recent events, even if pledges are of no avail, will suffice to put Afghanistan outside the sphere of Russian influence for many a year to come. Then what are the ultimate designs and dangers which a future generation may have to deal with, and the existence of which it is our duty as trustees for posterity to bear in mind? The questions are, How many troops will Russia be able to move across the Oxus and by the Caspian to Attrek? and what reserves will be supplied by the armies of the Caucasus and of Orenburg? These questions are discussed in considerable detail in Mr Boulger's book, and, we have no doubt, with as accurate information as can be obtained. But the result is, that at the present time the offensive

power of Russia across the Oxus is limited to the force which General Kauffmann could assemble, and which is barely one-fifth of what would be necessary before an invasion of India could be dreamed of. It is only by a supreme effort, by the lavish expenditure of millions, and after six months' delay, that this force could even be doubled from Europe. There remains, however, the line of march from the Caspian. The army of trans-Caspiania is but an advanced section of the army of the Caucasus, which, after many reverses at the hands of raw Turkish levies, recently conquered Armenia and took Kars and Erzeroum. The possession of the Armenian trilateral of Kars, Ardahan, and Batoum, sets free a force of 50,000 of these men, which might be easily doubled by reinforcements. The means of transporting it across the Caspian exist, and from thence there is an actual road straight to Candahar through the fertile districts of Northern Persia and Western Afghanistan. The danger to India therefore, in this direction, along a road at the base of which stands the army of the Caucasus—200,000 men—and behind which stands the European army, is far greater than that from General Kauffman, who, since the annexation of Khiva, is exposed to England's watchfulness. No doubt it is of this route to India that Lord Beaconsfield was thinking when, in his speech at the Mansion House last November, he used these words :—

“I do not wish, my Lord Mayor, in making these remarks [*i.e.*, in showing that a scientific frontier on the north-west would remove all anxiety in that quarter], that you should understand that her Majesty's Government are of opinion that an invasion of India is impossible or impracticable. On the contrary, if Asia Minor and the Euphrates were in the possession of a very weak or very powerful State, it would be by no means impossible for

an adequate army to march through the passes of Asia Minor and through Persia, and absolutely menace the dominions of the Queen; but her Majesty's Government have contemplated such a result, and we have provided means to prevent its occurrence by our connection with Turkey and our occupation of the island of Cyprus.”

It seems to us that our precautionary measures are keeping pace with such increased opportunities as the recent war has brought to Russia. If the annexation of the Armenian fortresses and of the harbour of Batoum, together with such railway as may be constructed from Batoum, sets free a considerable army, improves the communications with Southern Russia, places a fresh line of advance on Teheran and Herat at the disposal of Russia, and even tightens the hold of Russia on the northern provinces of Persia, still we at the same time have not been idle. British power can much more readily operate at the western end of this line of advance since the Treaty of Berlin than it could before, while our position immediately to the west of the Indus has been immeasurably strengthened. Besides, unless Russia is allowed to capture Herat, it will be difficult for her completely to dominate over Persia; and an invasion of India may be taken on the authority of Sir Henry Rawlinson himself to be impossible if Persia were hostile. We do not believe that any forward movement on our part will be necessitated for some time to come; and that if Russia understands that an advance on Merv will be followed by an occupation of Herat, any collision between the two empires in the East may, with ordinary watchfulness, be indefinitely postponed. There is an interesting article from the ‘*Journal des Débats*,’ reprinted as an appendix to one of Mr Boulger's volumes, which gives us a

French military opinion as to the impossibility of a Russian invasion of India. It credits Russia with 280,000 men and 488 field-guns as the total of its Asiatic strength from the Caucasus to Tashkent. It considers that the army of the Caucasus would be sufficiently employed in case of war with England in watching the eastern coasts of the Black Sea and the Turkish frontier in Asia, and in encountering any offensive operations on the part of England coming from the Persian Gulf. Thirty thousand men are all that would at the present time be available, even on paper, for an army of invasion; and these, it is shown, would take seven months, in a favourable season, and with the Asiatic populations, contrary to all expectation, remaining quiet, to assemble on the Indian frontiers. Any force required beyond these 30,000 would have to be brought from Europe, at enormous sacrifice, and by incredible effort. On the other hand, the British army will be on its own ground, with abundance of supplies and war material, in a territory which is naturally fortified and difficult to assail. Reinforcements could be landed at Sommeenee Bay fresh from England in fewer weeks than Russia would require months to transport her forces. "In fine," it concludes, from a close examination of the military resources of British India, "at the end of two months from the declaration of war, when the Russians are only still carrying out the first movements of concentration, the English will have 65,000 good troops and inexhaustible supplies at the frontier, supported by two lines of railway; and we may now add, with the sea as the base of their operations.

Under these circumstances, we consider that the Ministry are right in preventing a march on Cabul, if possible, and in resting contented with the results of the war as at pre-

sent achieved. Afghanistan should be reconstituted as an independent State, and, taught by experience, will no doubt understand that henceforth it must regard itself as the ally of Great Britain, who will not tolerate the interference of Russia in regions which border upon her own frontiers. For the rest, the policy laid down in Lord Salisbury's despatches of 1875 will suffice for the present, and secure to us positions of advantage for the purposes of observation and influence. The rivalry between Russia and England in the East is no doubt a subject which requires the watchful attention of this country; but for the present it yields in interest and importance to the more urgent duties of developing and husbanding the resources of the great empire over which we have obtained the mastery. All authorities agree that the finances of that empire—what with the heavy fall of silver, the cost of public works, and the past and anticipated effects of famines—are strained to the utmost. Yet a comparison between the rule of the British and of the Russians, so far as it can be instituted, is very much in our favour. According to Mr Schuyler's 'Turkestan,' General Kauffmann's government—what with its speculations, its neglect of public works, of commerce, of finance, and of education—can lay no claims to having carried out that civilising mission which has so often been declared to be Russia's peculiar duty in Central Asia. The government, however, secures tranquillity, and improves roads and bridges; and although it is denied that there has been any increase of trade between Russia and Central Asia, it is probable that that will ensue, unless the inhabitants, in addition to being neglected, are actually oppressed and disheartened. The great difference between Brit-

ish and Russian military administration is, that there is no native army at all in Central Asia. If natives desire to become Russian soldiers, they must join Russian regiments and become Russian individuals. Although in this way the valuable fighting material in Central Asia is to some extent neglected, on the other hand Russia has the immense advantage of being freed from all fear of mutiny in her ranks. And moreover, with the exception of Bokhara, she has swept away all semi-independent potentates within her frontier.

The English position in India is very different. Our total military strength in that empire is no doubt extremely formidable; although, for prudential considerations, the native force is not so fully equipped as the European. It is, moreover, under-officered in view of a European enemy. Its efficiency, however, has been amply proved by its subjugation of India, and by its services in border wars. It has met and vanquished Mahratta, Sikh, Affghan, Belooch, and Goorkha. Our weakest point, however, from a military, and also from a financial, point of view, is that, as the 'Times,' and 'Standard,' and Mr Boulger, have recently urged on public attention, this powerful army has very heavy duties to perform in watching our independent feudatories, and preventing their hostilities. Both Scindiah and the Nizam possess more numerous armies, both in men and horses, than those which are employed in controlling them. The larger native States, including Nepaul, have their own cannon-foundries and arm-factories. So long, therefore, as these great territorial armies exist, it will be impossible to weaken the garrison of Central India and of the Gangetic valley. In fact, the defending force which could be collected on the Indian frontier

from the armies of the Punjaub, Bombay, and Madras, is limited to an estimate of 60,000 men or thereabouts, solely on account of the heavy garrison-duties which these large armies of independent feudatories necessitate, and of the elements of danger which they create. The time has come, in the stage of international rivalry in the East, of financial pressure, of internal administration, when these armies should be abolished. They are not part of the defences of India; they are a huge drain upon its wealth. They are useless for maintaining the authority of the sovereign and the laws. Together they are half as large again as the Anglo-Indian army, and they are supported by the taxes levied by native princes on forty millions of people. One great step in the direction of making India safe from external attack, as well as from financial collapse, is to abolish these native armies, and to decree that all cannon-foundries and arm-factories should be destroyed. Until that is done, India is only half conquered, and British power in India is *pro tanto* weaker than that of Russia in Central Asia.

England is making enormous efforts to educate its great dependency, and in encouraging without controlling the impulses of the natives towards knowledge of all kinds, political and educational. Such a policy is both generous and great; but for its security it requires the total disbandment of the native armies, and the destruction of factories and foundries. The reduction of them is of no avail; for any chief can defeat the object in view, as Scindiah notoriously does, by passing the whole of his people through the ranks. What with their growth in power, what with the increasing influence of Russia, and what with the growing insecurity of Indian finance, the reduc-

tion of the power of these independent feudatories is becoming essential to the maintenance of our position in India. A scientific frontier is no doubt very important, but the perils of maintaining our authority in a half-conquered country ought not to be overlooked. We may take it that the difficulties in the way of combined action on the part of these feudatories will diminish as time and increased knowledge mitigate their sense of mutual hostility and distrust. The Indian empire can never be considered to be consolidated and secure until its conquest is completed. The dangers to be faced are evidently increasing; and the prospect of our having to contend for supremacy within the limits of the empire is, to say the least of it, quite as imminent as that of having forcibly to defend its possession against an external foe. As regards the latter, everything is being done that ought to be done; and we hope that measures of internal consolidation will follow. It must be noted, that besides the operations for strengthening the land frontiers, the sea defences have also been rendered more secure. Kurrachee, as the point which covers our sea base of operations on the south-west frontier, and the harbour of Bombay, are now well protected with batteries and turret-ships. It may also be said of Calcutta, Rangoon, and Madras, that their safety has been secured against any hostile operations which come within the range of ordinary possibility.

Even a slight sketch of the problems and difficulties which demand the attention of this country, from the Adriatic to the Indus, growing out of the enormous interests which we possess in the East, is sufficient to show the infinite importance of duly maintaining the discipline of the public service. It seems to us that, from the point

of view of the public safety, the events which have recently occurred in South Africa must be judged, not so much in reference to considerations of local policy as of their bearing upon the fate and fortunes of the whole British empire. At a time when the Treaty of Berlin was still only in process of execution—when, at any moment, difficulties might easily have been raised in regard to its intricate and even irritating details—difficulties which even the Czar's known determination to maintain peace might have been unequal to removing—at a time, also, when we are still involved in a war with Affghanistan, which may, no doubt, be on the point of completion, but which may yet entail fresh efforts and sacrifices,—Sir Bartle Frere chose, on his own responsibility, and contrary to the plain words, as well as the spirit, of his most recent instructions, to involve us in a war, the first beginnings of which have been clouded by serious disaster. No doubt the High Commissioner had exceptionally large powers—and even without them there must be allowed to every colonial governor, placed in circumstances of difficulty and danger, a large authority and a large discretion. But the upshot of the South African *imbroglia* is this: That Sir Bartle Frere absolutely failed to make out any case whatever of that urgent necessity which must be the sole justification for any colonial governor taking upon himself the responsibilities which the High Commissioner unfortunately assumed. Further than that, the policy of going to war at all, and the objects in view, are involved in so much doubt and uncertainty, that the advisers of the Crown have repudiated all responsibility for it. We therefore are placed in a predicament which is most embarrassing and vexatious—viz., that of having

to wage, at a most inopportune moment, at the bidding of a colonial authority, for purposes which the Home Government do not sanction, a war which is sure to be costly, and which has proved, and may hereafter prove, to be disastrous. There is no advantage to be gained from recrimination or censure; but it is worth while to weigh the exact position in which we have been placed, and to call for the necessary measures to prevent its recurrence by discouraging to the utmost any repetition elsewhere of the headstrong and precipitate measures which we have recently witnessed, to our dismay, in Southern Africa.

The public dangers resulting from insubordination on the part of colonial governors in regard to matters of this momentous importance are so enormous, that we are entitled to be absolutely guaranteed against their recurrence. Whether a strong censure, coupled with the establishment of telegraphic communication with Natal, are sufficient for that purpose, remains to be seen. It may well be that Sir Bartle Frere cannot be spared from his post, and that he is by far the most efficient statesman to cope with the difficulties of a situation which he has certainly done something to aggravate. But that affords to the English public only a limited satisfaction. We desire to be satisfied that the policy hereafter to be pursued shall be absolutely under the control of the advisers of the Crown, subject to their responsibility to Parliament and public opinion at home. Whether we look at the subject from the point of view of public danger, or of Ministerial responsibility, or of parliamentary authority, it is perfectly intolerable that the issues of peace and war, and questions of grave policy, should be capable of being wrested from the hands of the Cabinet by its subordinate functionaries, how-

ever experienced or however able. The Ministers have probably judged rightly in deciding to retain Sir Bartle Frere's services; but what is of far greater importance is, that precautions should be taken for retaining in their own hands the ultimate decision as to the terms of peace and the policy henceforth to be pursued. It seems pretty clear that Sir Bartle Frere will be satisfied with nothing short of the complete subjugation of Cetewayo. It is equally clear, from the debates in both Houses of Parliament, and especially from Lord Beaconsfield's speech, that the policy of the Government is by no means so extreme. The question is not, which of them is right in the interests of South Africa, but which policy is best suited to the present exigencies and permanent interests of the British empire. Sir Bartle Frere cannot be allowed a second time to force the hand of the Home Government, and to take his own course freed from all control. If he is—if the course which this *imbroglio* takes shows that the Cabinet have failed to re-establish an authority which has once been defied with comparative impunity to their rebellious subordinate, but with grave disaster to the empire—the result will be extremely damaging alike to the fortunes and to the reputation of Lord Beaconsfield and his Government.

In the division in the House of Commons on this subject, the Government only obtained its bare party majority. It is obvious that the House took a serious view of the position of affairs, though as far as the business has at present advanced it was not disposed to blame the Ministry. But it needs only to recall the Ministerial case as it was submitted to Parliament—viz., that as to the war itself, it had been undertaken against their orders; and as regards its policy, that was Sir Bartle Frere's affair, for which they

were not responsible, and in reference to which they would not pronounce a final opinion—to see that such a case may be presented once, but that it cannot be repeated without shaking to its foundations the authority of the Cabinet. In short, the position is this: Sir Bartle Frere is alone responsible for this war; the Cabinet have, without approving it, decided to retain him in power; Parliament has approved that course, but it is an implied condition of that approval that Ministerial responsibility should be resumed, and that the future course of South African affairs should be shown to be taken under the control and on the responsibility of the advisers of the Crown.

No one could have read Sir Bartle Frere's despatches without seeing that there was a tone of excitement and exaggeration about them which showed that the balance of his mind and judgment was disturbed. No one can have considered the events of the war by the light of its avowed policy without seeing that its necessity is quite disproved, and its prudence far too doubtful to have justified in the smallest degree the High Commissioner's assumption of all responsibility. It was a war of invasion for purposes of defence and with a view to security. The defence of Rorke's Drift and of Ekowe showed that we could repel attack; and if the Zulu victory at Isandlana did not prompt Cetewayo to advance, it does not seem very probable that a policy of aggression has been imminent. The war is not blamed on account of its disasters. What we say is, that for purposes of defence we have been sufficiently strong to hold our own after they occurred, and therefore were presumably still more so before we were weakened by them. And that is quite sufficient to dispose of the whole matter, so far as it is a question of urgent necessity.

As regards policy, we look to her Majesty's Government and not to Sir Bartle Frere. For that purpose we will briefly refer to the debate in the House of Lords on March 25th, and what do we find? Lord Cranbrook said that he felt strongly that the ultimatum ought to have been submitted to her Majesty's Government; and he added that the terms of it were such, that had it been so submitted it would have been in some respects modified. His opinion was, that everything should have been done to come to terms, everything should have been tried to avoid war if practicable, and that not till the colony was actually threatened was it necessary to take active operations against Cetewayo. "This country is well able to take care of itself; but the Government at home have a right to expect that they who have an eye over every part of the world should have the privilege and power of deciding upon measures which are vital to any one of the colonies."

Lord Salisbury distinctly pointed out that the Government had expressed no opinion upon the policy of Sir Bartle Frere. "They do not think that the very crisis of a difficult and dangerous war is the moment for expressing such an opinion." In fact, the only question which either House of Parliament considered was, whether Sir Bartle Frere deserved to be censured; and if so, whether he ought not to have been recalled. Lord Salisbury spoke out plainly as to the temptation to which colonial governors are exposed of considering only the particular country with which they have to deal, and not sufficiently remembering the circumstances of the empire at large. It was absolutely necessary, he exclaimed, that this lesson should be read, "That her Majesty's advisers, and they only, should decide the grave

issues of peace and war;" and he continued, "We have confined our censure or our blame to one particular point, which it is essential to notice in order to maintain the discipline of the public servants of the entire empire, but we have no desire to express any opinion at present upon the grave issues of policy which his conduct raises." He, too, objected to recall Sir Bartle Frere as contrary to the public interests. He had mastered the details of a difficult question. He knew the circumstances which led to the war, and the best way of overcoming the forces of the Zulu king. He had succeeded probably, beyond any other governor, in winning to himself the affection of the inhabitants both in Cape Colony and in Natal, whose apathy or discontent must not be rashly encountered.

Lord Beaconsfield also condemned Sir Bartle Frere's conduct, and even let fall the word "disgrace" in reference to his position. He referred partly to Sir Bartle Frere's past services, but chiefly to his present qualifications, as a reason for not recalling him. "We had but one object in view, and that was to take care that at this most critical period the affairs of her Majesty in South Africa should be directed by one not only qualified to direct them, but who was superior to any other individual whom we could have selected for that purpose." Lord Beaconsfield also expressed no opinion upon the policy of the ultimatum. He, however, in general terms, emphatically pledged himself to a policy of confederation as opposed to a policy of annexation. He alluded to the difficulties of concluding a lasting peace with the Zulu king, but at the same time he contemplated the necessity of eventually entering into some arrangement, and of taking our chance as to the extent to which it would be observed.

We can hardly suppose that Lord Beaconsfield has viewed Sir Bartle Frere's conduct with any satisfaction, or that he will allow the authority of his Government a second time to be set on one side. We did not observe in his speech any disposition to soften or explain away the offence which had been committed, and he was careful to put the retention of the High Commissioner entirely upon grounds of public interest, which would, of course, fail to support the condonation of a second offence. The speech of the Colonial Secretary on a later occasion was not equally satisfactory. In his anxiety to defend the retention of Sir Bartle Frere after the censure to which he had been subjected, he fell into the error of minimising and explaining away the censure—a circumstance which somewhat unaccountably escaped notice in the debate. Sir Michael Hicks Beach undoubtedly approved of the censure which he had been the instrument of conveying. He repeated several times, in the course of his speech, that it was not till December 19th, when the Government received Sir Bartle Frere's despatch stating the demands which had been made upon Cetewayo, that they had any reason to anticipate an aggressive policy. That policy had been adopted without first consulting the Government, which entirely declined to justify the policy of the ultimatum. He went on, however, not merely to say "that there was a great deal to be said on the part of Sir Bartle Frere," but also to deny that there had been any unprecedented censure. So far from being unprecedented, he maintained that it was a very slight reproof indeed compared with what had formerly occurred, when a censure ten times exceeding the present one in severity had been awarded by the Colonial Office to the governor of a colony

for acting contrary to instructions. We must add, however, that Sir Michael Hicks Beach officially declared in his place in Parliament that he joined fully in the regret which Sir Charles Dilke asked the House of Commons to express, "that the ultimatum, which was calculated to produce immediate war, should have been presented to the Zulu king without authority from the responsible advisers of the Crown." And under all the circumstances it may fairly be hoped that both Parliament and the public have taken a sufficiently serious view of the case to insure that the terms of peace and the course of the war will not be allowed to slip out of the control of the Home Government, and to counteract any tendency on the part of colonial governors to undertake responsibilities better suited to a Kauffmann in Central Asia than to a colonial governor representing the Crown of England, charged with the maintenance of its honour and interests, but bound by his office to obey its responsible advisers. Englishmen would certainly, as Lord Salisbury said, never tolerate want of courage and enterprise on the part of any statesman placed in Sir Bartle Frere's position; but they are impatient of insubordination, and jealous of all attempts to break loose from the discipline of the public service, and virtually to set up an uncontrolled authority.

It is too early to express any opinion as to the terms of peace which ought to be regarded as sufficient. With regard to the general policy to be kept in view, "each colony," says Lord Carnarvon, "has its own difficulties and its own problems to solve; but the difficulties and problems of South Africa are the hardest of all. They hardly exist in any other colony; they certainly do not exist in combination in any colony." He re-

ferred, in the first place, to the vast native population, in all its stages from semi-civilisation down to barbarism, with which we have to deal; to the inexhaustible swarm of warlike native tribes pouring down from the north; the temptation which exists of slavery, requiring all the vigour of English authority to put it down; and to the antagonism of race in the Dutch and English nationalities. While arguing that it was our duty in every way to conciliate the Dutch population, he insisted upon the necessity of a uniform native policy as a means of avoiding the recurrence of these miserable wars. In other words, the ex-Minister supports Lord Beaconsfield's policy of confederation, and is not desirous of further annexation. Whatever may have been the policy of annexing the Transvaal, Englishmen do not desire any increase of territory in South Africa; and they are impatient of the sacrifices entailed by these perpetually recurring South African wars. No doubt the naval and military station of Cape Town is of enormous importance to us; and, independently of that, we cannot recede—we cannot bestow responsible government and then take it away again. But our colonial governors must endeavour to find out some peaceable *modus vivendi* with the independent rulers of neighbouring territories; otherwise we shall be burdened with territory which no one wants, and with subjects whom it will be most costly to govern. If that result is to be avoided, the authority of the Colonial Office at home must be upheld, the subordination of all governors and high commissioners abroad, however skilled in the complicated affairs of their colonies, duly maintained. No one desires that Sir Bartle Frere's services should be lost at this crisis, which he has mainly helped to produce;

and it is obvious that, unless recalled, he cannot, under such circumstances, in honour run away from his post. If he will consent to subordinate his views of policy to those of the Cabinet, all accounts agree that he is the fittest man to be intrusted with authority. Lord Carnarvon, as well as the Ministers, bore the highest testimony to his character and capacity. His career in India was frequently referred to in the debate, and the Colonial Secretary justified the confidence of the Government by reference to his services at the Cape. As we join so thoroughly in the condemnation of his arbitrary declaration of war, we may conclude by doing justice to his services, which have been so effective in bringing about the co-operation of the colonists, so important at this conjuncture. Though self-government had been granted to the Cape Colony, without imposing at the same time the duty of self-defence, Sir Bartle Frere nevertheless guided that colony into those very measures, which had been too long delayed, and did so against the powerful influence of the Ministry whom he found in office. His influence availed for the establishment of a yeomanry force, a force of volunteers, and of Cape Mounted Riflemen; for the regulation of the possession of arms by the natives; for the appropriation of men and money towards suppressing rebellion and carrying on their border wars. He also induced them to denude themselves of her Majesty's troops, in order that those troops might be sent to the defence of Natal—and that at a moment when, owing to the disaster that had occurred, the Cape Colony itself must necessarily have been in the most serious danger from the native population within its borders. Such was the list of recent services to which the Secretary of State referred. They are borne out by Lord Carnarvon's

emphatic testimony, and justify the declaration of the ex-Minister: "I know of no other man who can make his way through the tangled labyrinth of South African politics, and who has so good a chance as he has of solving matters in a satisfactory way, either for South Africa or for his country." Such is the man who is now face to face with a considerable crisis in South African affairs! He is a statesman whom it is to the interest of this country to keep in office; but one with whom we should readily part, rather than permit the discipline of the public service to be impaired, or the grave issues of peace and war and of the general course of policy to be wrested from the hands of the responsible advisers of the Crown.

Our view, then, of the general aspect of public affairs as regards the external relations of Great Britain, is that we are gradually and steadily emerging with credit and success from a position which has been one of considerable perplexity and danger. The tawdry rhetoric of Sir William Harcourt to his "brother Yorkshiremen" fails to shake this view. The careless jubilation of his speech at Sheffield was ridiculously inconsistent with any sincere conviction of "danger, debt, disaster, distrust, disquiet, and distress" forming the exclusive characteristics of our present position. In spite of all the serious—nay, overwhelming—difficulties which have enveloped Europe as well as ourselves in recent years, even one of the ablest of Opposition orators can conjure up no feeling of gloom which joy over the successful birth of an epigram or a joke does not visibly dispel. The conduct of affairs has been so managed as absolutely to disarm the Opposition. Anybody can make a forcible speech to a provincial audience, who are per-

fectly satisfied so long as a loud voice and a confident utterance arrest their attention. But in Parliament, in presence of those whom they criticise, the leaders of Opposition have little spirit for either speech or division. They tone down the one, and run away from the other. According to Sir William Harcourt, the Chancellor of the Exchequer is himself the explanation of that remarkable phenomenon. "His amiability dulls opposition as a feather-bed smothers a cannon-ball." Public affairs cannot be clouded over to any alarming extent with "danger, debt, disaster, distrust, disquiet, and distress" when the champions of an oppressed public, the tribunes who rage over the grievances of the people, are tongue-tied and mesmerised by a little amiability. If we cannot at present exclaim, Happy the country whose annals are dull! we may at least, on their own showing, congratulate the leaders of Opposition that their energy of criticism is easily dulled, that their indignation is extremely evanescent, and that, so far from being sincerely dissatisfied with the position of affairs, they cannot conceal the enthusiasm of delight with which a happy jingle of alliteration and a crackling shower of epigrams fill their patriotic bosoms. The keynote of Mr Bright's oration at Birmingham was that our trade with India was only 24 millions, and the profit $9\frac{1}{2}$ per cent! He absolutely admitted that, by that horizon, his views of our interests and duties in the Eastern Question are bounded; and he considered

that a Ministry which regarded those interests and duties with any different sense of responsibility might be left to the retribution which awaited them. There was a tone about both speeches of excessive confidence in the result of the next general election. We have been used to that display of exulting confidence on the eve of every debate and division for the last three years, but at the critical moment the attack has been tamed, and the division if possible avoided. The Conservatives have no reason to fear a dissolution. No doubt, when the difficulties of the Eastern Question have been thoroughly surmounted, and the Berlin Treaty completely executed, the present Parliament will be approaching the natural term of its existence. We hope and believe that long before that time arrives the troubles in Afghanistan and South Africa will also have ceased, and that reviving trade will have restored the buoyancy of the public revenue. But however that may be, the confidence of the public in the Government is clearly unabated, and, relatively to the Liberal party, the Ministry is far stronger in the sixth year of its existence than it was at its first formation. The conviction was growing upon the country that in times of very considerable difficulty and danger its affairs have been successfully conducted, and that the somewhat extravagant vituperation which is out of doors directed against it lacks that consistency and soundness which would justify its repetition within the walls of Parliament.

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REATA ; OR, WHAT'S IN A NAME.—PART III.

CHAPTER X.—THE “MONKEY’S MIRROR.”

Careless of beauty, she was beauty’s self.

“CONFOUND it! it’s enough to drive a fellow distracted, trying to get the effect of those lights through the tree-stems. Before you have time to put in a wash of yellow, the sky has turned orange, and purple, and green, all in a minute—and your chance is gone.”

They were sitting in the forest,—they two alone, Otto and Reata—and Otto was putting in the last touches to a sketch he had worked at for some days, the glorious tints of a tropical sunset showing through the foliage and trunks around.

“Don’t do anything more to that grass,” said Reata, who was watching his progress eagerly; “you have made it nearly too long already, and I shall be tempted to mow it down the way I shaved Ritter Toggenburg this morning.”

Something in this last phrase had given Otto’s thoughts another turn; so after a minute’s silence he said, with what seemed to Reata an abrupt transition, “By the way, I wanted to ask, is there any place about here where you can get things?”

“Get things!” Reata echoed, in genuine surprise; “can’t you put your query into a more definite shape? What do you mean by *get*, and what do you mean by *things*? Do you mean buying, stealing, or finding? and is it articles of food, dress, or ornament that you require?”

“Not exactly any of these,” said Otto, with rather an awkward laugh; “and I fully intend to come by my purchases honestly.”

“Then you mean to buy something,” interposed Reata; “there is one point settled at least. But under what head does the article come?”

“Well, gentlemen’s things, you know,” explained Otto, vaguely.

“Then I suppose you mean some especially horrible kind of tobacco, which you can’t get on without any longer, and the want of which has been making you silent and absent for the last few days.”

“Have I been silent and absent?” he inquired, looking towards her, where she was sitting; but he could only see the lower

portion of her face, for she had taken Fícha on her lap, and was bending over her, engrossed in plaiting up the woolly hair with fine grasses—a proceeding which bade fair to convert the patient animal, ere long, into a sort of vegetable hedgehog.

“No, it has nothing to do with smoking; my wishes at this moment lie more in the direction of knives than of tobacco.”

“Knives! Good gracious! what do you want knives for? Are you expecting a hand-to-hand fight with the brigands? or are you not satisfied with the cutlery provided in the house? or what? Do please come to the point about this mysterious purchase of yours, which belongs neither to food, dress, nor ornament, but comes under the head of knives.”

“Well, in plain language, I want a razor.”

Reata clapped her hands.

“A razor! Then you are going to cut off your beard. I am delighted! Just the other day I was wondering what your expression really is like. When will you get it? To-morrow? Please do.”

“Where will I get it, is more the question. Is there no place nearer than E—— where such an article can be procured?”

The fact was, that the casual remark about beards which Reata had made that morning, *à propos* of Ritter Toggenburg, had made a deeper impression on Otto's mind than he would have liked to acknowledge. The very first thing he had done, on reaching his room, had been to scrutinise his face in the glass; and the conclusion he came to was, that his beard must be got rid of at once. But then, as he turned instinctively to his dressing-case, a weighty objection presented itself—he had no razors. Only now he remembered the fact

that an untimely lurch of the vessel had, in the early part of the voyage, sent his razor-case flying out of Piotr's hand overboard, where with a minute splash it had sunk under the green surface, and probably now lay reposing at the bottom of the ocean, encrusted with corals and pearls, or buried in deep sea-weed.

The most exasperating thing about the matter was, that Otto was perfectly aware that his features did not need any of that ignominious “planting-out” to which Reata had referred with such scorn, “A man may be anything under his beard,” she had said. “I wonder if she thinks I have got a jawbone like a gorilla; and if Piotr hadn't been such a precipitate ass, I could have had my beard off now, in the twinkling of an eye.”

However, regretting was no good, nor swearing either, although Otto indulged in some tolerably vigorous language on the subject. For a moment he speculated wildly on the possibility of making his pen-knife fulfil the office of a razor, but wisely abandoned the idea as unfeasible. He vowed, however, that by fair means or foul he would have a razor before many days were past.

“Any place nearer than E——?” Reata rejoined, in answer to his question; “well, there is no very civilised place. Up the hills there is no village nearer than thirty miles; but to the east, over the plateau, there is a small village at fifteen miles' distance, and it may possibly possess a razor or two, although I have no good grounds for believing so.”

“A small village at fifteen miles' distance, which may possibly possess a razor or two,” repeated Otto, reflectively; “why, we are more out of the world even than I thought. Can you give me no more encouragement than that, Fräulein Reata?”

"Yes, now I remember, there is a shop in the village; I noticed hammocks and sausages hanging outside. I advise you to try, at least; it is your best chance of getting shaved."

"I am quite willing to try; but not being an aerial being, there is some difficulty about reaching the place. It is out of walking distance; how about driving? Would my aunt consider it too far for her vehicle to go?"

"Driving! You don't know what you are talking about; no wheeled vehicle would ever get there whole. A great part of the way lies along a narrow path through the thick wood."

"Then there is nothing for it but patience and resignation. I suppose riding——"

"Riding! yes, that is the very thing," she cried.

"But won't my aunt——" Otto put in, rather dubiously.

"Your aunt? The Giraffe? What possible objection could she have? Of course you shall ride, and I shall go with you to show you the way," continued Reata, with perfect simplicity. "I have not had a ride since you came, for I never had any one to go with me; and the Giraffe did not approve of my scouring the country alone."

"But will she approve of this plan?" he inquired, still doubtfully.

"What is the use of asking so many questions? Of course she will approve. Oh, it will be delightful! And we must go to-morrow, for the weather will not hold out much longer like this. There was a frog croaking at my window this morning, and that is the surest sign of rain here; but you had better not mention the frog at all to the Giraffe, it might make her nervous."

"I will not be fool enough to

mention the frog. But how about a side-saddle? Is there one here?"

"Certainly there is not."

"Can you manage without one?"

"Of course. I don't need pommels to keep my balance; any saddle will do for me. I never rode any other way as a child. For the matter of that, I haven't got a riding-skirt either; but I will make the Giraffe give me her shawl—that will have to do."

Now that his first scruples were at rest, Otto was transported into the seventh heaven of happiness at the prospect of a long ride with her, and with her alone. An eager conversation on the subject ensued, and he speedily came to the conclusion that it was a most fortunate chance which had caused Piotr to drop his razors overboard.

In talking, he took up his sketch-book again and began making a rough study of some broad-leaved creepers which hung down over the branches of a plantain close at hand. Soon he discovered that the creepers were not the real object of his study—that, in fact, they were only serving as a background to a sketch of Reata's head. The brim of her hat was inconveniently broad, and hampered his view of her face; and besides, unaware as she was of his intentions, she was not by any means immovable.

"For heaven's sake, Fräulein Reata," he exclaimed, involuntarily, as she turned right round in her position in order to watch a humming-bird on a bush behind her, "do not turn your head in that manner! I was just getting it right."

"Why should I not turn my own head, if I choose?" she began, in surprise; then, as he pointed to his sketch-book, "you are painting me? taking my portrait? But I thought you were doing the creepers."

"I thought so too," said Otto, penitently; "but I may go on with this, may I not?"

"Well, I suppose you had better; but I can't promise to sit very still."

There was a pause, broken presently by Reata: "Why did you say this morning that you will have to be leaving soon? You never said a word of that before."

"My leave will soon be expired," he answered, with a sigh. "I had not realised it before; I can't be very long here."

"But you have only been ten days."

"Is it only ten days?" he replied, pausing for a moment in his work. "What a lot of things happen in ten days!"

"I can't remember anything particular having happened. Everything, on the contrary, has gone very smoothly — much smoother than I thought it would."

"People can get very well acquainted in ten days, I think," he said; "it seems to me that I have known you all my life."

"What nonsense you talk! You don't know me a bit; you don't know anything about me—not even my name."

"Oh yes, I know that; I found it out to-day," he exclaimed triumphantly, looking up at her. She raised her head very quickly, and—was it his fancy?—she seemed to have grown a shade paler, and in her eyes there was the same frightened look he had seen there in the morning.

"You know my name?" she said, in a half-alarmed, half-defiant tone.

"Yes, indeed I do. Why should it surprise you so? It seems to me more extraordinary that I should have been so long ignorant of it."

"Tell it me, then!" she commanded, with her eyes still upon him.

"Fräulein Lackenegg."

Greatly to Otto's surprise, and rather to his discomfiture, Reata broke into one of her rare thrilling laughs.

"Well, perhaps I did not catch it quite correctly," he said, in a slightly huffed voice; "I only heard it in a hurry. It may be Tackenegg, or Sackenegg, or Backenegg; but I am sure that is the sound of the name."

At each attempt Reata only laughed the more. "No, no, it is all right," she managed to say at last, recovering her gravity; "the first name was right, and I really am very sorry for having laughed. I must beg your pardon; but you said it in such a comical manner."

The tears of laughter were in her eyes still as she looked at him across the grassy space which divided them, with half-clasped hands, and a deep colour in her cheek, brought there by her earnestness. How could he not forgive her!

Otto felt foolish, and did not know what answer to make.

"Oh, I am a fool!" he exclaimed, with extraordinary energy. "Of course it is my fault; I always make a mess of names."

"Well, how do you like my name, now that you have heard it?" she asked, speaking quite gravely, and bending down over Fícha to give the finishing touches to her herbal decorations.

"I like your Christian name better," he answered, in a low voice; "it is the loveliest I have ever heard."

"Is it really?" she asked, with true pleasure in her voice. "I am glad you like it; I am fond of it myself,—it was also my mother's."

"Then I suppose it is a true Mexican name, for I have never heard it before."

"No, I daresay not—it is not very common. It is not likely that

you should come across a second Reata."

"No, most decidedly not; I know I never shall," he said, with a degree of assurance which surprised her much.

"And do you know what it signifies?"

"Your name? Something delightful, I am sure."

"Nothing very delightful; nothing about flowers, or birds, or butterflies, as perhaps you supposed."

"Nothing very horrible then, I hope. It couldn't be; it is not in the nature of things."

"Do you know what a *lazo** is?"

"Of course I do; a thing you catch wild buffaloes with, and antelopes also. I have seen it on pictures dozens of times."

"What sort of pictures?"

"Oh, a lot of men in fantastic costumes, prancing about on horses, and throwing elegant little nooses at gracefully ambling antelopes."

Reata opened her eyes in surprise, and laughed. "Now, listen; I am going to tell you what they really are. In reality there are two sorts of *lazos*. What is usually called *lazo* is twisted out of hemp or threads of aloe. The Mexicans use it only for amusement; and please remember that they do not catch wild buffaloes with it. The true Mexican *lazo* is twisted out of leather thongs; it is no plaything, but a terrible arm."

"And which kind are you? The plaything, or the terrible arm?"

"Oh, I am the dreadful one, of course; couldn't you have guessed that? *Reata* is exclusively the name for the great leather *lazo*. I assure you, it is no joke for a buffalo to be caught with one of them."

"Do, Fräulein Reata, try and keep quiet for five minutes more,"

Otto interrupted. "I am just putting in the shades of your hair; and if you keep shaking it back in that way——"

"By the by, how is my portrait getting on? I had forgotten all about it."

"Not very well, I am afraid; that is to say, not to my satisfaction. You are as difficult to do as the sunset sky; always changing."

"Why? Because I turn orange, and green, and purple, all in a minute?"

"No. Because you turn crimson and white, all in a minute."

"Would you put your hat a trifle back?" he said, a minute later; "your eyebrows are so much in shade that I cannot make them out."

She pushed up her leaf-hat without raising her eyes. "I suppose there will be no difficulty in painting them; they will hardly be getting pointed, and square, and arched, all in a minute."

"No, but I *have* got them too arched here; they look more like Gabrielle's eyebrows than yours."

"By the by, haven't all members of your family got very fine eyebrows? I have been told so."

"I believe they are considered to be rather good," answered Otto confidently, wondering within himself whether Reata had noticed how well-marked his own were. "Arnold has got a most tremendous pair, almost too thick and bushy, they give him such a severe look."

"Olivia Bodenbach had beautiful eyebrows, I believe," remarked Reata, while idly passing her fingers through Fícha's hair.

"So I heard from my father; but she seems to have got rid of them somehow. How has that happened?"

"Got rid of them!" Reata was beginning in surprise. "Good heavens, what have I done!" she exclaimed, with sudden vehemence, seizing up Fícha at the same moment, and burying her face in the fluffy coat.

"Fräulein Reata, what has happened?" asked Otto, in alarm. "I don't think she can be much hurt. I did not hear her squeal. Shall I come and see?" half rising as he spoke.

"No, no, please don't," she replied, lifting her face. "It was very foolish of me; it was only that I got a fright for a minute."

"I didn't know that you were so nervous; you don't often start like that."

"No, I don't often. It is all right now; please don't bother me about it. Go on with your painting."

Otto obeyed.

"Do you believe in family likenesses?" Reata asked, a minute later, after a pause of reflective silence.

"Of course I do. I am an instance of it myself."

"Ah yes, to be sure."

"My family are remarkable for their resemblance to each other—as a rule."

"Why do you say *as a rule*?"

"Because there are exceptions."

"Tell me one."

"My aunt, for instance."

"Yes, the likeness between you and her is not striking, certainly."

"I hardly think it is"—and Otto smiled quietly to himself as he mentally compared aunt Olivia's homely and ill-cut features with the cast of his own faultless profile.

"Some relations are very unlike each other—near relations too,—so unlike, that you would never guess them to be connected," remarked Reata, while a curious smile lurked about the corners of her mouth, and she bent once more over Fícha,

putting some of the grass-stalks to rights, and passing her fingers caressingly over the white silky ears.

"There, White Puppy, you may go!"

"So that is the result of your evening's work," said Otto, laughing, as he watched the released and highly-decorated animal stretching its legs complacently.

"Yes; and now show me the result of yours," and she put out her hand. "Don't get up; just throw it over here, and I will examine it while you are putting up your colours."

He tossed the book, so that it fell by her side.

"You have not done that very cleverly; it has got closed, and I shall have to hunt for myself. I am not quite sure whether I shall know my face on paper. This is Steinbühl, I know, and that Hamburg, and—I hope this is not me—a woman with a large frilled cap. You may have been making a caricature of me the whole time. It was foolish of me to trust you. Ah, how lovely!" she exclaimed, as she turned over another page, and she gave an involuntary start. "Who is it, Baron Bodenbach?" as she saw him smiling; "is it, can it be meant for me? Ah," she went on, with a shade of disappointment in her voice, "I see you have not been doing my portrait at all! You have made an ideal head out of it, and only used my features as a foundation."

The page she had opened showed a sketch of her head, against the background of dark leaves. Faultless it certainly was not; but there was character and life in the features—a suggestion of great beauty, if not the perfect rendering of it. Otto had succeeded in giving the expression—that is, one of the hundred expressions of the lovely face before him.

"It is as like as I can make it," he replied, with a sigh.

"Nonsense!" she said, impatiently. "Of course, I know that I am fairly good-looking; but this is quite another thing."

To this he made no answer.

"Don't you think I am fairly good-looking?" she said again, with a little stamp of her foot.

She looked up for his answer, openly, innocently, without a shade of affectation or coquetry, but perhaps with just a passing feeling of childish vanity. And then she met his gaze of ardent, undisguised admiration, fixed full upon her; and all at once she understood.

Her eyes fell before his with a consciousness he had never seen there before. The crimson tide rose and rushed over neck, cheek, and forehead, suffusing the delicate skin with colour up to the very hair-roots. She put up her hand to her face, as if to check the tell-tale red; and in the next moment, before he had time to speak or know what she was doing, she had risen to her feet, and was gone past him into the forest—flying as if from a danger.

Otto began several exclamations, and did not finish any, as he sat staring in amazement; but the trees hid her in a moment. He could only hear the fast receding bark of Fícha, who, wildly excited at this unexpected move of her mistress's, had given chase, evidently thinking that something out of the common was in the wind.

Reata fled through the forest, hardly knowing why or from what she was running, and with no other object than that of getting to the house quickly, and shutting herself up in her room.

She ran till she was breathless; and then, as her pace slackened, an idea seemed to strike her, for she turned rapidly aside and went still deeper into the depth of the

trees. She had a distinct object in view now; she wanted to reach the pool which she called the "Monkey's Mirror."

On the moss beside it she knelt down and looked with eager eyes into its cool depths. Together with branches and flowers, it sent back to her her warm, bright beauty in all its radiance; and for the first time she saw herself with different eyes.

"Yes, it is the same face as in the picture," she murmured, bending down very low over the glassy, unruffled surface. "I *am* beautiful! How could I not see it before! I read it so clearly in his eyes when he looked at me now"—and at the very recollection, alone as she was in the forest, the blood shot to her cheek again.

She put up her hands, and began hurriedly undoing her plaits, first one and then the other, and shook down the waves of dark hair over her shoulders; and then she bent forward again, till the dusky fringes trailed in the water, smiling at her own image, almost laughing with pleasure as she drank in each separate line of feature and form.

With the instinct just born within her, she pushed up her sleeve, and gazed with loving vanity at the perfectly-shaped round white arm, wondering whether most women had round white arms like that.

"Yes, I am beautiful," she repeated, with an almost defiant inflection of her voice, as she met the gaze of another pair of eyes, belonging to a hideous animal of the lizard tribe, speaking as if daring it to contradict her assertion. The animal, squatting on a stone alongside, had been eyeing her proceedings with a mistrustful look. Apparently it lacked inclination or courage to accept the challenge; for, turning tail, it scuttled away in the grass in a crestfallen manner.

There are few women who reach the age of twenty-one without discovering the full worth of whatever charms they may happen to possess. On most, the sense of it grows gradually, in proportion to the encouragement their vanity receives from their outer world. On some few it comes as a revelation—like a lightning-flash, which shows them their power. Of these, again, some have gained their beauty by degrees, unconsciously to themselves and perhaps unnoticed by others; while some women, who have always been in possession of perfect loveliness, are in ignorance of the truth—and this not through defect of intellect, but merely through the force of circumstances. The mere habit of the thing, the bare fact of daily beholding in the glass the same outlines of beauty, will cause people of a certain character to undervalue or ignore their gifts.

Such was Reata's case. She had spoken perfect truth when she said that she considered herself to be fairly good-looking.

Most undoubtedly she would have discovered her advantages sooner had she mixed in society; but from her great isolation, and even more peculiar circumstances of her life, she had never been in the position either to test her power over men, or to gauge her fairness against that of other women. I will not attempt to affirm that Reata was more innocent of the germs of vanity than the greatest part of her fellow-sisters; but as yet these germs had lain dormant, and it remained to be seen what effect this new element would have on her life—whether the knowledge to which her eyes had been opened would brush the first bloom of freshness off her heart.

Her perceptions, once awakened, were keen; and now that her mind was turned upon this subject, it

travelled with extraordinary rapidity. That one unguarded look of Otto's had told her much. Till that moment, from the very consciousness of his own weakness, he had been more prudent than was his wont, and had kept his secret unbetrayed. Of course there had been moments in the last ten days when any one less novice than this girl was would have guessed at his feelings; but to her those moments had told nothing. The thing was so new, so totally unexampled in her experience, that no perplexing thought had ever risen within her.

She had fondled her newly-found beauty as a child does a plaything; and now she sat quite still, slowly putting back her hair into its tresses. Meanwhile her thoughts were busily following up one train. Otto's admiration was manifest; but then—what more?

She had never read a novel; and all her idea of love was gathered from a very limited selection of old-fashioned German poetry. What was the expression in his eyes which had so startled her? Did all men always look at pretty women in that way? Or was it, perhaps, what was called Love? Did Ritters Delorges and Toggenburg look respectively at Kunigunde and the nameless nun in that fashion? "And did they feel as frightened as I did, and run away and make fools of themselves in the same way, I wonder?" she pursued her meditations.

She had done plaiting up her hair, and, with her hands in her lap, sat, her eyes still on the pool, though now it was too dark to see any reflection.

Yes, she thought she could understand his look now. "And I?" she questioned herself, with sudden curiosity. In words there came no reply; but for long she remained sitting, immovable as she was, still

looking at the shadowy pool, as if expecting to read her answer there.

How long she would have remained thus I do not know ; but a gentle weight on her sleeve roused her—something between a scratch

and a pull. Fícha, one fore-paw extended, was gazing with intense pathos into her mistress's face—with eyes that said, as plainly as eyes could say,

“COME HOME !”

CHAPTER XI.—ALARMED.

No insurmountable objections having been raised by aunt Olivia, and the frog having been successfully hushed up, Reata and Otto, soon after sunrise, started on their expedition. They rode in silence for some time,—Reata apparently intent upon guiding her steed among the scraggy brushwood of the bank, which sloped down on to the plain ; Otto in his mind attempting to analyse the change that had come over Reata since last night. It was nothing very palpable or definite ; but still there was a change, and a change which he was puzzled to define. In some measure he connected it with the way she had so suddenly left him in the forest yesterday : but his mind was not clear on this point ; he was not able to follow all the workings which hers had undergone. That she had been startled, he could not fail to perceive ; and in the first moment of his astonishment accused himself of having offended, or in some way hurt, her feelings. But her manner when they met at once convinced him that this was not the case. There was no shade of coldness in it ; but rather it was a change from gay to grave, from unrestraint to reserve. On meeting him in the breakfast-room she had proffered her hand with a certain timidity quite new in her. They had not been alone yet since ; but even had they so been, Otto would have forborne questioning her on the subject. He confessed to himself that he

did not know what to make of it, but likewise acknowledged that he would probably make something bad of it if he attempted to meddle.

Yesterday Reata had been all eagerness about this ride, which she herself had planned. To-day there was a sort of shrinking, although no reluctance, in her way of alluding to it. She seemed content to take no more than a passive part, leaving all arrangements to him, as if glad of his guidance ; and this laying-off of her usual independence was in Otto's eyes an additional charm.

Reata's horse, which had been selected from the horse-paddock more with a view to use than to beauty, was a heavily but well built animal, answering to the name of Solomon—in height fifteen-two, with legs like pillars, looking up to any amount of work, but not over-eager for it.

Neither horse nor dress was calculated to show her off to particular advantage ; for it would be useless to assert that aunt Olivia's cashmere shawl, which had been converted into an impromptu riding-skirt, had anything very fascinating about it when viewed in that capacity. Fortunately, however, Reata's looks did not depend upon dress.

The roan mare which Otto rode was, as he himself had seen at the first glance, by far the most valuable amongst Miss Bodenbach's horses. He had kept his eye upon her ever since, and never passed the paddock or stables without casting

an admiring look at his favourite. Maraquita was rather above the usual height of the true Mexican breed, to which she belonged; perfect in temperament and paces, and beautiful in build,—the very ideal of a soldier's charger. Miss Bodenbach had had the horse only for a few months in her possession; and judging from what he had seen of his aunt's knowledge of horse-flesh, Otto doubted not that it was the merest chance which had brought such an irreproachable animal into her possession.

A small imp-like being, in wide linen trousers, perched on the bare back of a gaunt chestnut, brought up the rear, acting as groom and provision-carrier to the party. A more ludicrous pair could hardly have been found. It would have been difficult to form a correct conjecture as to what the boy's age might be; for while in stature he looked about ten, his wizened features gave him the appearance of at least another ten years, and there was a set look about his short frame.

Don Ramirez, his steed, being conspicuous in many ways, deserves more than a passing notice. A gaunt, ungainly chestnut, standing full seventeen hands; three immense white stockings, and a large white lantern on his face. A flavour of thorough-breeding pervaded his bony frame, and something in his appearance suggested broken-down gentility, if not fallen grandeur. From what particular point of grandeur he had fallen was unknown, for nobody on record had ever seen him look otherwise; and there was a tradition extant, that even in Don Ramirez's best days a close observer could easily count his ribs. The pompous name of Don Ramirez was his original appellation; but Reata had caused it to be changed into the more vulgar title of "the Bony One," and as such he

was generally known. There was a certain dignity about him, a remnant of better days; and the free and easy comportment which the boy Ortega invariably indulged in when on his back seemed to offend his finer senses. Rarely did Ortega persevere for more than three minutes in the position which rational beings adopt on horseback. When Reata's back was safely turned he would rapidly make a change of posture, and seek to ease his limbs either by kneeling, sitting sideways, or with his face towards Don Ramirez's tail; or if he thought the moment particularly favourable, would rise to his feet and perform the semblance of a war-dance.

After a quarter of an hour of careful stepping they emerged on to flat ground, and setting their horses' heads right across the plain, began a brisk trot, which brought them well out into the open. Otto, seeing that there was no danger of Reata losing her seat with Solomon's smooth swinging paces, proposed a canter, which she eagerly acquiesced in.

The cool breeze which tempered the heat to-day made the forenoon especially agreeable for riding, and the clouds which lightly veiled the sun, although they robbed the plain of its usual brilliancy of aspect, were far pleasanter than the scorching rays.

Away the cavalcade bore: the roan mare leading, snorting, and passionately tossing her head; Solomon plunging on half a length behind; the rear brought up by "the Bony One," his head very high up; while Ortega, balancing the provision-basket with great nicety on his head, further diversified the aspect of the party by swinging his two arms alternately round in their sockets, like a windmill suddenly gone mad.

On they sped, over the unbroken

level of the prairie grass, most glorious expanse of riding-ground—smooth and elastic, free of deceitful molehills, and innocent of those little patches of swamp which sometimes neutralise the finest stretches of land. To the right, the line of bank and wood; a mass of low shrubs piled at the foot; little bushes with dense dull grey foliage, the leaves hard and stiff; higher up the groups of agaves and cactuses, their outline broken here and there sharply by the lofty head of a palm-tree. Across the plain, to the left, the same thing repeated, only seen more dimly, topped by the blueness of the hills; and at the far, far end, straight in front, the same green and faint blue lines just visible, with the clouds hovering above.

Whatever shade of constraint Reata had felt at first, vanished during that gallop; and when at length they drew up, and allowed the steaming horses to recover breath, it was with all her usual outspoken frankness of manner that she exclaimed, "Was not that heavenly! I don't think I have enjoyed anything so much for ages!"

The discovery of her own beauty, which last night had so startled her, was forgotten now; or rather she had accepted it as a fact, and with wonderful rapidity got accustomed to the idea. Hers was not the sort of nature on which such a discovery would act oppressively, or tend to make self-conscious for any length of time. She bore her honours lightly, gracefully, as if she had known them for years; and although, like a true woman, she rejoiced with all her heart at her treasure, she did not turn her thoughts to considering the best means of drawing profit from it.

As she slackened reins, and patted her horse's neck approvingly,

Reata cast a stolen glance at Otto. Never had he appeared before her to such advantage; never before had she been so struck with his good looks and graceful figure. "Of course that comes from his being a cavalry soldier," she decided in her mind; "a cavalry soldier must always look better on horseback than off."

And she really believed this as she said it to herself. It never once occurred to her, that had she passed the day with him as usual in the house, or in the forest, this day would not have been quite as other days—that she would have looked at him with a new attention, and considered him in a different light. She was aware of a change in herself since yesterday, but she was not aware of all its effects.

In her eyes Otto's riding was the very ideal of the noble art. Mexicans belong to the wildest riders under the sun; they are positively heedless of danger. Reata, with Mexican blood in her veins, would have scorned the idea of a man who showed anything but the most reckless coolness on horseback.

If Reata's thoughts were at this moment tinged with a feeling of admiration she had never been aware of before, Otto's were just then little short of adoration. He had many times heard of the great prowess of the fair Mexicans as riders, but he had never believed it possible that a woman riding a lady's seat on a man's hunting-saddle, and not in the constant habit of it, could maintain herself with such faultless equilibrium during a hard gallop of ten minutes. (Reata was riding, as all Mexican women do, on the right-hand side of the horse.)

They had another long canter after that; for it was necessary to gain ground while they could, as their way later lay along a steep

path in the hills. When they drew rein this time, the green and blue lines which bounded the extremity of the plain were much nearer. Palm-trees and plantains detached themselves singly or in groups from the darker background, and the low prickly masses of the Syngenists could be distinguished like a bulwark at the foot. On all sides the fantastic cactuses waved their spiny arms high up in the air. Sometimes they were monstrous boas, reared a hundred feet from the ground; at other times they crawled and twisted like bristly reptiles on the earth: the dead and the living growing together in one inseparable mass; the living green, juicy, and vigorous—the dead white, dry, and rustling, thrusting in their withered skeletons between the ranks of their successors.

Abreast of the riders, peacefully grazing or lying on the grass, was a herd of white horses; their colour throughout uniform, modified only by age, and descending from the dead white of the aged animals to the grey shading on the coats of the frisky foals, who gamboled about at their ease by the side of the mothers, and under their parent's watchful eye. Otto was interested by the sight, and drew nearer for a closer view. The riding horses neighed frantically, and the greys answered in a chorus. Some of the youngest and most foolish amongst the foals came trotting up, followed at a distance by their more prudent but anxious mothers, and with elongated neck and glistening eyes snuffed and flared inquisitively at the strangers. On Ortega's spirits, the spectacle of the horses had the effect of a strong and sudden stimulant. His ideas of the dignity of a groom's deportment when accompanying a lady and gentleman on horseback, vague

and undefined as they had been before, entirely collapsed now. He got to his feet, to Don Ramirez's openly-expressed indignation, and hallooed loudly to the herders—they answering with a peculiar wild cry, used as a signal on the plains. Reata's vehement remonstrances, given in Spanish, were insufficient to calm him down, and it needed a few strong German phrases from Otto, which, although incomprehensible, acted as a sedative. He caught up the spirit of the thing, if not the letter, and humbly explained that the horse-shepherds were his *amigos intimos*. When they had trotted clear of the greys, they looked back and saw the little foals kick up their heels and go careering back to their mothers' sides, where they stood with ears erect, watching with quivering excitement the progress of the riders—a mixture of youthful frivolity and filial obedience.

The site of S—— was unprepossessing in the extreme. It was a wonder how, in a picturesque country, it had managed to get itself built in such an unpicturesque spot: the houses all crowded up near together, leaning totteringly against each other, as if for support; and the bare hillside, with the oxen grazing on it, rising steep above the roofs. Vegetation was dwarfed and scanty; the luxuriant trees and juicy herbage of the forest had retired here, and made way to an arid, stony ground, not unlike the grand desolation of the Karst. The shallow valley, which lay so high up in the hills, was open to the cold sweep of the north and east winds, which, meeting with no opposition, blew mercilessly over the palm-covered huts.

Ortega was sent on to reconnoitre; and by the time they got up to him, the whole population had collected, and formed a dense

circle round "the Bony One." Ortega was carrying on conversation with everybody at once, and the result was a shrill and deafening noise; but at the sight of two new and greater objects of interest, sudden silence came over the multitude. Every tongue was hushed, and all eyes fixed with awe and admiration on the ponderous folds of aunt Olivia's cashmere shawl. Never before had riding-habit been crowned with such success. It was, in half-audible whispers, pronounced to be of a regal splendour, and worthy of a queen. Reata, being well used to the habits of her country-people, took both the curiosity and the admiration with perfect composure, and with Otto's aid dismounted. Solomon's reins were thrown to Ortega; and Reata saying something in an imperative tone in Spanish, to the effect that somebody was to hold the third horse, there was a wild rush of all the male members of the community, which ended in the roan being fought for by half-a-dozen pairs of brawny arms. The excitement threatened to terminate in a regular fight, as the slightest cause will provoke in Mexico; but some expressive motions of Otto's riding-whip caused most of the combatants to retire. A tall swarthy fellow, with a battered straw hat, a dark red scarf round his waist, and an evil-looking scowl on his face, who had been among the hottest of the candidates, stepped back, muttering some fearful-sounding Spanish oaths between his teeth, and throwing an enraged glance at the lad who had got possession of the reins and a vindictive one at Otto.

Whenever a rare chance did bring a stranger to S——, it could only be with the object of visiting the shop. The inhabitants well knew this; and instinctively they now led the way towards their

proudest building—the *tienda* of the place. Señor Ambrosino, the apothecary, landlord, cook, barber, and general dealer of S——, being already forewarned of what was in store for him, stood at the door of his house, bowing to the ground, and repeating protestations of respect and of his willingness to perform any service that could be named.

"Does *el suo Señorío* wish to be bled, *bacios la manos de Vd* to dine, or to have his hair cut?" he began, in the most affable manner; "or does the *Señorita* desire to see my silk handkerchiefs or *Guayaquil* hats, *servidor de Vd*? I have some excellent—*bacios la manos de Vd*—*mescal* in bottles, and some first-rate fresh leeches which could be applied in a moment, *servidor de Vd*; no trouble, and moderate charge,—or if that does not suit, will *el suo Señorío* name whatever article is required?"

Without many preliminaries the errand was explained; but at the mention of razors, Señor Ambrosino's face clouded over.

"*Caramba!*" he exclaimed, adopting an attitude of theatrical despair, "how unfortunate! If you had asked me for fever-pills or mantillas (such splendid ones as I have, embroidered with parrots and palm-trees!)—if you had called upon me to draw a tooth or boil you a mango, I should have rejoiced in the happiness of serving you. But a razor!—one of the only two on which I subsist as a barber!—impossible!" and digging his hands deep down into the pockets of his linen trousers, the worthy shopman planted his back against the wall in dejected resignation.

"Then we may as well go home again, I suppose," said Otto, turning to Reata and speaking with a bad assumption of indifference.

"Nonsense!" she replied, coolly;

"don't you see that he is dying to sell you a razor?"

"But if he denies having any for sale?" asked Otto, unable to perceive any signs of this ardent wish.

"If *el suo Señorío* will be so kind as to take place," began Ambrosino, in a depressed tone of voice, "I will be happy to take off his beard, or his hair, or both, in a minute, *bacios la manos de Vd*: no trouble, and moderate charge."

This obliging offer being declined most decidedly, Señor Ambrosino's spirits sank to a point which was almost melancholy.

"If that does not suit, then I am at a loss how to oblige *el suo Señorío*; I, Ambrosino, who have never been at a loss before—not even when I was asked to make a peruke out of a buffalo's tail. Such a splendid peruke as it was! But sell a razor! my only means of living! take the bread out of my own mouth!—impossible!"

"How much will you take for it?" was the only rejoinder Reata made.

"Sixty *pesetas*," replied Señor Ambrosino, with a lugubrious sigh.

"Give him thirty," said Reata in German to Otto, leaning back on her bench.

Señor Ambrosino looked at the money, which Otto tossed on to the rough-hewn table serving as counter, with a funereal air, but without a word. The thirty *pesetas* once distinctly before his eyes, the elasticity of his spirits returned, as if by magic. He produced a broken box, containing two razors, from which he carefully selected the worst; and with immense courtesy of speech, and salutations worthy of an ambassador, he handed it over to Otto.

Outside the door, under a little morsel of projecting roof, there

was a rickety table and a couple of stools; and here, in sight of the admiring inhabitants, the provision-basket was opened, and they ate their frugal repast. It was like a dinner in a play. Every action and movement could not have been considered with more attention had they been actors on the stage; and certainly every morsel which they carried to their mouths would not have been followed with such deep and breathless attention.

"*Madre de Dios*, what a fringe!" exclaimed a fine-looking woman, who had pushed boldly to the very front of the row, pointing to the shawl, which Reata had flung over the palisade. "It is twisted as thick as young *coralillos*."*

"*Caramba!* yes, a splendid garment!" echoed a repulsive old crone, bent double over her stick. "Fine taste the Señorita has, *verdaderamente*. A handsome shawl she has chosen, and a still handsomer *esposo*,† hi, hi, hi! They make a fine couple. Where did she pick him up, I wonder. She must have been clever about it, for by his white skin he is no Mexican, hi, hi, hi!" she tittered shrilly. And the girls alongside began pushing each other and giggling, while some of the men laughed loud and coarsely.

The last speakers had been so near that Reata's quick ears had caught every word. She grew scarlet, and bit her lip; and, with a nervous dread of what the effect might be on Otto, she glanced instinctively at him. His unconcerned expression reminded her reassuringly that the remarks, made in Spanish, had been to him unintelligible. Nevertheless she felt that her position was getting awkward. Not a moment longer would she stay there. All her innocent

* The coral-coloured snake.

† Husband.

pleasure in the expedition was gone. It was the first time that she was brought in face of the unpleasant consequences which the slightest imprudence is attended with in this world; and she condemned her conduct bitterly, as unpardonably foolish. Her own simplicity provoked her; it was nothing less than inconceivable idiocy, she thought. How could she have been so simple as to go on an expedition of this sort, a long day's ride alone with Otto, alone with any man? It was in her nature to rush to extreme conclusions; and at this moment she doubted not that Otto must think her either very stupid or else very light-headed.

Being thoroughly put out with herself, she, woman-like, vented her humour upon the man who was unwittingly the cause of her embarrassment.

"I don't know why we are sitting so long here!" she exclaimed, rising so abruptly as to upset the three-legged stool she had been sitting on. "I am not in the least hungry; it is enough to take away one's appetite, to be stared at like wild beasts at a show. If you are done, Baron Bodenbach, I think we had better be going."

"I am quite ready," answered Otto, saying what was not true; for he had not half satisfied the fine appetite engendered by his ride.

In reply to Señor Ambrosino's flowery sentences, his profound reverences, and humble cravings for further *ilústre fíavor*, Reata only deigned to give a short *adios* and a very slight nod; and then, having settled her shawl again, she walked quickly up the street, and called peremptorily to Ortega to lead up the horses. She had not minded the crowd before; but now the sight of all those faces around was hateful. She felt their eyes fast-

ened on her with gaping curiosity; and in the front row she caught sight of the odious crooked hag talking in eager whispers to the women near her. There was almost reluctance in the way she allowed Otto to help her into the saddle; gladly would she have dispensed with his assistance entirely, had she been able to do without it. As it was, her nerves were off their usual balance; she slipped back the first time almost into his arms, which put the climax to her ill-humour and to the interest of the crowd. Once safely in the saddle, she did not wait a second, but started off briskly, scattering the urchins, who had been unprepared for such a hasty exit, and leaving Otto to follow as best he could.

A universal cheer, half ironical, half encouraging, followed the party; and then in the next minute they were out of hearing—alone in the silent valley.

Within the last hour the sky had grown leaden and heavy; but not a breath was stirring the air. The bad weather was coming, with less warning than it usually gave. They might not reach home dry.

Otto said as much to Reata, when he was by her side, and also that it would be advisable, bad as the road was, to keep on trotting, if she did not think that the fatigue would be too great for her. He had been no less surprised at her sudden departure than the inhabitants of S—, and putting spurs to Maraquita, had soon overtaken Solomon with his steady but ponderous gait.

"Yes; we had decidedly better push on," Reata said, in answer to his apprehensions about the weather. "I wish we were at home again! I am sick of the whole concern. It was very foolish of us to start on this expedition, when we knew that the rain could not be far off."

"But surely we cannot lay the

whole blame on our imprudence? This change has come with unexpected suddenness. You said yesterday that the clouds gather for two days, as a rule, before the wet sets in."

"Did I? Then I have got wiser since yesterday," was her reply, given almost sharply. "At any rate, there is no use disputing; let us get on, for heaven's sake! Ortega, I insist on your sitting quietly, not dangling your legs like that round 'the Bony One's' neck; do you hear? And see that you keep close behind us."

"Are you sure that trotting will not tire you too much?" Otto asked, anxiously. "The path is very rough, and you will be dreadfully shaken."

"But you have just said that it is our best course, and you knew that the path was rough; and besides," she added coldly, "you need not be disquieted on my account; I am not likely to get tired on horseback."

They proceeded at a steady pace along the track, intent on picking their way over the broken ground; and silent, not only on this account, but because Otto, finding that all his attempts at conversation had failed most deplorably, had given them up.

Their path led them first down the treeless hollow, then into the shadow of the forest, where they had to ride single file—Otto at the head and "the Bony One" bringing up the rear. For a full hour the road remained the same, requiring attention at every step, and necessitating a sharp look-out ahead, in order to avoid holes and the numberless tree-roots which straggled across at every moment.

It was a monotonous part of the forest, with none of the mixed character which tropical forests usually present. Cotton-trees were here the exclusive tenants of the

ground; the riders had but an endless *vista* of thin stems standing straight and stiff, stretching away on all sides. High above them, in the crown of branches at the summit, there was the unbroken buzzing sound of the wild bees, humming softly over their nests. But even this was monotonous; and down below there was nothing to break the quiet, save when a ripe fruit came down with a thump on the hard sward.

In spite of her proud protestations, Reata, before they had gone far, began to acknowledge to herself that she had overtaxed her strength. Not having felt the slightest fatigue in the morning, she thought that she never would get tired. But galloping over an even plain, and this sort of continued jogging, together with the strain laid upon the attention, was a very different thing. She thought with dread of the way still before her; for although now close upon the end of the forest, yet there was a long expanse of marsh between them and the plain, and to circumvent it would take as long as the way they had come. But the thought of acknowledging her fatigue, and thus gaining the rest she longed for, she repudiated with scorn. It was not only that she prided herself on her untiring strength in equestrian exercise, but how could she now demean herself before the man whose anxiety on her account she had treated so disparagingly?

At last the cotton-trees were left in the rear, and now there lay before them a clear space which they would have to cross before entering on the path among the tall bushes to the left—the only practicable road to the plain.

As soon as they were out of the shadow of the trees, they perceived the figure of a man sitting at the foot of a wild-pear bush. He raised

his head at the sound of their horses' hoofs, and while they approached kept his eyes fixed on them with an intent stare.

He had a heavy red sash tied round his waist, and an evil scowl on his face; and, moreover, there was something stuck in his waistband—something that had not been there before, when they had seen this man in the village—something that shone like well-polished metal. When they had got a dozen paces nearer, Otto saw that it was a pair of pistols.

The man kept his eyes fixed on them as they passed him close, and when they looked back at him he was still in the same position—still bending forward eagerly, with his face towards them.

"I did not notice before that that fellow carried pistols," Otto remarked, when the bushes had hidden the man from view.

"I know he had none," she answered.

"Upon my word, it looks almost as if he had been waiting for us," said Otto, laughing, but with a shade of real anxiety in his tone; then, as he suddenly perceived the paleness of her face, and attributing it to her nervousness, "there is not the slightest cause for alarm, Fräulein Reata. Although we have not got any arms with us, remember that we are mounted, and that scoundrel is on foot. It is quite impossible that he should overtake us."

"I am not afraid," she answered, throwing back her head haughtily; "but for the matter of that, the man could very easily overtake us by cutting through the marsh; it will not bear a horse's weight, but it will a man's. There is no difficulty in the way of his shooting us, that I can see."

"He shall not touch a hair of your head while I have breath re-

maining!" Otto exclaimed, excitedly.

"If we are both to be shot, which seems to me highly improbable," she replied, in the spirit of contradiction which, with her, was the usual form of ill-humour, "it is no matter which of us is first."

Otto again relapsed into discouraged silence.

Would the path ever come to an end? Reata asked herself every minute. Each pace made her feel more faint and giddy. It was three in the afternoon, and breakfast had in reality been her only meal that day. She was glad that Otto was on in front, for he could not see how pale her cheeks were getting, nor how convulsively she was clutching on to the saddle to steady herself. The shawl seemed to be dragging down her legs like lead; the bushes and stones were dancing before her eyes in an endless monotony. The little white lilies that grew thickly between the tufts of rank marsh-grass, and which she had thought so pretty in the morning, now seemed to her ghastly and shapeless.

Well she knew that with a single word she could put an end to all this misery, but her foolish pride would not let her speak; and besides, she shrank with morbid dread from anything that might prolong this *tête-à-tête*, which she so much wished over. No: she would manage to hold out, she thought; and then, in the next minute, she called out faintly to Otto to say that she wanted a rest; but she said "Baron Bodenbach" in such a low voice that he did not hear, and kept steadily on. She almost felt glad that he hadn't heard her; but when, a few minutes later, they had got to the end of the marsh, almost on to the edge of the plain, and Otto turned round towards her, her last resolution gave way, and she slid off her horse and stood

beside it, looking as if she would faint.

He was by her side in an instant, with a face almost as white as her own.

"For heaven's sake, are you ill? What has happened?" and, half timidly, he put out his arm as if to support her; but she frowned, and drew back a step.

"No, no, please don't," she said, speaking with a mixture of alarm and haughtiness; "I am quite well, only tired. I shall rest a minute, and I—I should like some water."

"You shall have some directly," he answered, confidently, although he had no reason to suppose that there was a drop of water within three miles—the water in the marsh being fetid and undrinkable. "But oh, *Fräulein Reata*, why did you not speak before? It has been too much for you. What a brute I was not to guess that! If you can only reach that bank over there, there is a dry sheltered spot where you can rest."

Reata shook her head in reply; but she was forced to take his proffered arm for support, which she did with the less reluctance as a vague conviction rose in her mind that if she *did* faint he would carry her, and that would be much worse.

With a sigh of relief she sank down on to the soft cushion of grass, and leant back against the little piece of steep bank, which to her seemed more delicious than any arm-chair she had ever sat in.

By wonderful good-luck it appeared that there was, at a short distance—not more than a few hundred paces, in fact—a draw-well; one of those used to water the herds of horses that inhabit the plateaux. Ortega was despatched with a flask to be filled; and meanwhile Otto made fast the horses to the stoutest bushes he could find, and Reata sat

quite still, with half-closed eyes, enjoying the feeling of entire repose and the sudden quiet which had come over her. And yet she could not quite do away with the anger she felt against herself and against Otto—an anger that sprang from alarm. Her mind was full of contradictions at this moment; she felt provoked and grateful, annoyed and relieved, all at once. On the whole, annoyance had the upper hand; and she replied to Otto's inquiries in the same cool tone she had used towards him during the last two hours. It seemed almost as if she wanted to make up for the weakness which had forced her to lean on him, by the repelling iciness of her manner. The change, inexplicable as it was to him, wounded him deeply. Think as he might, he was not able to call to mind a single circumstance, even the slightest, by which he could have given her cause for offence. Even granted that her humour was variable, and that over-fatigue was telling on it, still he thought that some deeper ground must be underlying. Could it be that she had guessed his feelings, and wanted to crush his hopes at once? Or had she taken a sudden violent hatred to him? What would he not give if only she would speak to him as she had spoken yesterday—as she had spoken during the last ten days!

"I wish I had gone for the water myself," he said, after some silence. "That boy is sure to take his time about it."

"You couldn't have gone faster than Ortega, and probably you would not have known how to draw the water."

"I should have managed somehow," said Otto, colouring slightly, with a foolish feeling of mortification. "I am not as awkward as it seems I appear. But I wish you would be persuaded to drink a little

wine. I am sure it would revive you."

"No, thank you," she answered, shortly.

"It may be ten minutes before the water comes——"

"Well, I can wait for it ; and besides, I feel a great deal better now. Are you quite sure that the horses are safely fastened ? It would not do to have one of them escaping."

Otto, for answer, bent aside the twigs of the bushes to the right, and disclosed a partial view of the horses, in reality not more than a dozen yards from them, although hidden by the dense foliage. Solomon, who was the nearest, had not lost a single instant in stretching his ponderous limbs on the grass, and was enjoying the unexpected rest. Maraquita, alongside, stood erect, looking over her shoulder, and, with ears bent forward and dilated nostrils, appeared to be straining to catch some distant sound, or snuffing something in the air far off. "The Bony One," forming the outpost, was making better use of his opportunities, indulging in a hearty meal on all the branches within his reach.

"Apparently you have little confidence in my arrangements, Fräulein Reata," said Otto, half reproachfully, as he let the twigs fall back into their place. "Do you not think that a cavalry soldier ought at least to be able to encamp his horses safely ?"

"How can I have confidence, when I have had so little experience in the efficiency of your arrangements ?" she answered, trying to speak lightly ; but even in speaking she regretted her words.

Otto was sitting at a few paces from her, diligently digging the head of his riding-whip into the ground alongside of him. He looked up at her quickly as she

spoke, and then continued his digging, as he said, in a voice much graver than was his wont, "How long, then, do you require to know a person before you feel confidence in him ?"

"What is the use of asking such pointless questions ?" she said, pettishly. "Of course there are some people in whom one never can feel confidence, while others one would trust at once."

There was a pause. Otto had not raised his eyes again, but sat scooping away as before, making a deep hole in the ground. At last, in a very low tone—so low that she only just caught the words—he said, "I wonder to which of these two classes I belong !"

It could hardly have been intended for her ears ; and so there was no answer needed, which was fortunate, as just at that moment Reata felt unable to say a word. The air seemed suddenly to have become stifling. "It must be the rain in the atmosphere which makes it so heavy and choking," she thought, although she could not remember ever having experienced this precise sensation before. Something, she knew not exactly what, was going to happen ; and she sat still, not daring to move or hardly to breathe, in the fear of hastening what was to come. And yet an almost hysterical desire overpowered her to make some movement or say some word which would break the spell. Her heart was beating fast and hot with dread of what Otto's next words might be.

In her leaning posture, from under her half-closed eyelids, she could just see the profile of his handsome features clearly defined against the background of leaden sky. Dark masses of clouds were towering in all directions ; they lowered sullenly, and hovered with threatening weight over the line of

hills opposite. There was nothing wanted but a breath of air to complete the bursting of the storm. As yet, a deadly stillness lay on all nature—it, too, seemed spellbound, unable to find voice or breath.

Far up above their heads, two

black specks were floating, the only moving objects in this vast calm. Larger and larger they grew in descending; and now they could hear faintly the sharp eagle-cry, as the great birds balanced in mid-air, to espy the bearings to their rocky nest.

CHAPTER XII.—LOSS AND GAIN.

"In Love, if Love be Love, if Love be ours,
Faith and unfaith can ne'er be equal powers:
Unfaith in aught is want of faith in all."

—VIVIEN'S Song.

Something came fluttering down through the air—an eagle's feather. Reata's eyes followed it, and in so doing she caught sight of Ortega coming towards them running. He was running very fast, and seemed to be calling out something; but the distance made it unintelligible.

While she was still looking at him, there was a slight noise near them—a crash of branches—the hasty stamp and snort of horses, and then the thunder of galloping hoofs.

"The horses are running away!" cried Reata, springing to her feet; and as she said the words, there shot past the opening in the bushes, not six paces from them, a man on horseback, mounted on Don Ramirez, dragging by her reins the mare Maraquita—both horses plunging fearfully.

It was all the work of less than half a minute. In the next, Otto rushed forward to where the solitary Solomon, now at last startled out of his usual composure, stood pawing the ground and making furious efforts to get his head free. With one tremendous tug, which tore down half a branch, and with the help of Ortega—who had now come up breathless—Otto loosened the reins. His foot was in the stirrup, when he was stopped, held back by Reata's hand on his arm.

"Don't, don't go after him! He has got pistols; did you not see? You will be shot. Don't go, Otto, for my sake!"

She was clinging on to his arm; and, by the nervous clutch of her fingers, he could feel the convulsive trembling that ran through her frame. Every trace of colour had fled from her face; all her life seemed gone to her eyes—those wonderful dark eyes, which even in the calmest repose were enthralled, which only wanted the touch of passion to make their beauty irresistible.

There was passion in them now—a sudden revelation of passion, both in her eyes and in her voice. Well she knew that a Mexican would not think twice about shooting his pursuer; but it could not be fear for the safety of a mere friend which thus transformed her in a minute. She had never looked, never spoken, like this before.

"For your sake, Reata! Say that again!" cried Otto, in a glad voice. The happiness painted on his face, as he turned back towards her, almost frightened Reata. The crisis was coming now; and she had brought it on herself.

With a sudden step backwards she dropped his arm, and stood trembling afresh; but now with fright at what she had done.

Meanwhile Ortega, taking the

law into his own hands, had mounted, and was gone in pursuit.

"Reata! darling Reata!" cried Otto, as he seized both her passive, unresisting hands in his firm grasp. At the touch of her fingers, horse-stealer and horses, the need of the moment, vanished from before his mental vision, as things that had never been. "What would I not do for your sake, and for your love!"

The colour had come back to her cheeks with a rush; she felt it welling up from her heart, as it had come upon her in the forest yesterday. Her hands no longer remained passive; she struggled to release them, so as to hide her face and shut out that burning eager gaze which sought to meet hers.

She drooped her head, she turned it aside; but still she had not spoken.

"Will you not say that you love me?" he asked, speaking low, and gently drawing her towards him. "Will you not make me the happiest man on earth by one word, one little word? I cannot live without your love. Reata, can you say you love me?"

There was passion, truth, happiness in his voice; there was everything but doubt. Indeed, why should it be? Socially speaking, all the balance was in his favour; but never having loved a woman as truly as the one who stood before him now, he came very near to undervaluing his own advantages—as near as was in his nature; and had not that look of hers been so betraying, he might still have doubted.

Could she say that she loved him? The answer, which last night had floated so dim and unformed in her mind, was now clear. She felt sure that she loved him; but she did not know how to say it. A confused idea, perhaps connected with the marriage service, came into

her mind, that it was necessary, on such occasions, to pronounce distinctly the monosyllable expected of her; but speech seemed to have forsaken her for ever. She cleared her throat, and tried to speak; the word would not come—and instead, her lips trembled into a conscious, happy smile.

It was answer enough for Otto. He dropped her tightly-clasped hands, only to put his arms round her shrinking figure and draw her close to himself.

The rising wind, which swept softly but with growing breath over the withered grass, stirred her hair and cooled her hot cheeks.

Far away the eagles had soared by this time; slowly and calmly, with outspread wings, they were dropping into their nest, as if thankful to be at home again.

Reata allowed herself to be drawn into those strong arms, which held her with such a gentle touch; and giving up all resistance, she let her head sink on his shoulder. This way, at least, she could hide her burning face from the light of day.

"My beloved, my beautiful Reata!" murmured Otto, bending over her, speaking in an intoxicated, intoxicating whisper. He did that sort of thing so well; he had done it so often before—but never as truly, never as passionately, as now.

Every worldly consideration was swept away; the rich marriage which was to bring him a comfortable independence, the charms of riches, Comtesse Halka, the wishes of his family—they all melted before the liquid softness of Reata's eyes.

They stood there, these two happy beings, or these two young fools, whichever you choose to call them, in the quickly gathering darkness of the approaching storm,

knowing and feeling nothing outside their circle of happiness ; unconscious that the ever-blackening clouds had sunk and covered the blue hills opposite, and that the wind, till then stealing noiselessly along, its progress marked only by the bending blades and quivering leaves, had gained a voice—a low wail in the distance, a sharp rustling in the bushes close at hand ; unconscious also that they were miles from home, and bereft of the means of getting there.

A loud neigh close at hand recalled them from their brief trance. Reata started, and looked up for the first time again ; and Otto gathered his senses together, and remembered where they were.

Far off on the plain two figures were disappearing. Don Ramirez, urged on by the horse-stealer's pitiless spurs, stretched his bony legs over the plain ; fifty paces behind, Ortega pressing Solomon to the pursuit, but with every stride losing on the chestnut's pace. Maraquita, before they had got half that distance, had reared straight up and broken away ; and after careering over the grass wildly for some minutes, came galloping back towards her post, where she stood still at a little distance, shaking her mane in the triumph of escape—every muscle quivering under her glossy skin.

A little coaxing and a bunch of grass held out towards her were enough to quiet her. She came up with coquettish, hesitating step, and allowed Otto to take her reins and make them fast to a branch.

Heavy drops of rain were beginning to fall, pattering on to the broad-leaved plants, and thickening every moment.

Otto, now fairly aroused to the gravity of the situation, was at his wits' end as to what he should do.

"How angry my aunt will be

with me ! She will think it is all my fault."

"I will make it all right with her ; and, after all, it is only 'the Bony One' that is lost. How good of Maraquita to come back ! There is a farmhouse not half an hour's ride from here, if we could only reach it ; but how ?"

"I suppose Maraquita could hardly be expected to carry us both ?" Otto put in.

"If Solomon had returned," he added more seriously, "the matter would have been simplified. You could have gone on alone ; but as it is, there is nothing for it but to set out on foot, leading Maraquita."

"Oh, but I could easily ride Maraquita," she interrupted ; "only—only—I should not like leaving you alone, Baron Bodenbach."

Otto turned towards her with a reproachful look in his fine eyes. "Why don't you call me as you did before ?"

"Did I ? Oh, but that was different. I can't do it again. I don't think I shall ever be able to do it again."

"Then I don't think I shall ever be able to let go your hands till you do so ; and we shall have to stand here all night, and will be soaked through. Say, 'I do not want to leave you, Otto.'"

Otto usually got what he wanted from women when he asked for it in that tone and with that look ; and, of course, he got what he wanted now.

Heavier and heavier were the rain-drops falling, driven by the fitful gusts of wind, whose plaintive, distant wail had changed into an angry howl. There was no time to be lost. Otto dreaded the notion of letting Reata go on alone on the mare, but it was the less of two evils. He was compelled to trust to her courage and power of keeping her seat. Even by the time he

had settled her in the saddle her thin dress was wet through.

"Good-bye," she said, timidly, putting her hand in his, and looking at him as if they were going to be parted for weeks, instead of for an hour. "You cannot mistake the way if you follow the edge of the forest."

He let go her hand and gave the mare her head. Maraquita went off with a bound; but Otto, following her with his heart in his eyes, saw her fall into a settled gallop, which put his worst anxieties at rest.

The blood was coursing so hotly through his veins that he felt no chill from the rain that was soaking through his light summer-coat. As long as the blinding drops would allow him, he kept his eyes on Maraquita's lessening figure; but soon she was lost sight of, and, heading the wind, he set off in the direction of the farmhouse.

In the morning they had cut right across the plain, but now he had to skirt the bushes to the left in order to gain their place of refuge.

It was fortunate that the way was so unmistakably simple; for Otto, paying no heed to his steps, pressed on mechanically, living over in thought the bliss which the last half-hour had created for him on earth. He called himself a man blessed among a thousand for gaining such a prize,—for being the first who had awakened that pure and untouched affection. How quickly the happiness of his life had sprung up! It had grown up with such a rapid growth that he scarce noticed it till it had taken root in his soul and entwined his every thought. Not three weeks ago he did not know her, did not guess that she existed, and now she was his own; she had given herself to him with that complete unreserve of action which was her great characteristic.

Never had he dreamt of such unmixed happiness as what he felt when he held Reata in his arms. He began recalling every fleeting expression in her eyes, every word, every movement. With what divine grace she had shrunk, and yet yielded, as he drew her towards him! Her very silence, not hesitating, but timid, was eloquence to him.

However hotly the blood is coursing through a man's veins, a strong pour of rain and a cutting blast will in the end damp and chill him. A loose bunch of leaves, torn off and carried by the wind, flew straight into Otto's face, and their dripping wetness roused him a little from his dreams, and made him feel more aware of the wind and weather against which he was struggling.

It was not late, but darkness was gathering over all the country around—not the darkness of night, but of a fearful storm.

The worst was yet to come; for though the water had not ceased raining down a second, there were heavier clouds still to break—clouds which came rushing before the wind, banded together in compact black masses, all towards one point, uniting their forces for a grand explosion.

Had it not been that he was walking in the shelter of the bushes, Otto could not have kept his footing in the face of the blast which came sweeping over the plain, bending the pliable branches down to the ground, snapping off the little brittle ends of twigs which resisted its breath. 'Midst its howling, now grown hollow and fearful, and scarcely distinguishable from it, was another sound—the long-drawn howling of the prairie wolves, at all times striking the stranger's ear with dismay, and which the mighty gale now bore upon its wings, and made fantastically weird.

Otto shivered as he threw a

glance across the wide lonely expanse to his right—he the only human being for far around. Presently he started; for he seemed to see through the gloom an army of spectres flying towards him. Were those not their ghastly helmets and pennons he could discern? No; it was only the herd of white horses they had passed in the morning,—like him, seeking to escape the storm. He could see their manes flying as they rushed past him, the herders at the head, and the foals running wildly at the side.

Would Reata be under shelter yet? he asked himself, as his teeth began to chatter with cold; and at the thought of her he quickened his pace, thinking more of the happiness of meeting than of the urgency of getting under roof.

During a temporary lull in the storm his mind returned instinctively to the delightful occupation of castle-building. But no joy in this world is without alloy; and in painting his future happiness with Reata the inconvenient question suddenly obtruded itself on his mind, “What are we to live upon?”

“Upon love,” he probably would have answered had he been five years younger; but Otto, although he was madly in love—although just now he had been losing sight of everything but his love—was no fool. He had seen too much of the struggles of poverty in his own family—he had felt (and this was more important) too much of the sting of poverty in his own person—to forget its existence for long.

Suddenly now, as he struggled against the wind, with the rain-drops beating in his face, he realised all at once that the step he had taken overturned, with one blow, the plans he had so carefully laid out for the future. He had always said that his marriage should better his fortunes. In taking a wife he

would have done with scrimping and poverty.

Up to this moment, even since aware of his love, he had never been distinct with himself as to what he meant to do. The slight twinge which damped his enthusiastic joy, although it was not regret—it could not be regret—yet savoured of something like disappointment at the downfall of all the hopes he had hitherto cherished; for, after all, Otto was but human.

He had nothing beyond his pay, not to speak of his debts; and Reata could have no money of her own. Of course there was still uncle Max's will to look to; and if that failed, of course aunt Olivia could make everything easy, if she chose. Simultaneously came the thought, “How will she take the news? Reata is a wonderful favourite; but old ladies are cranky. I think it will be better, decidedly better, to be on the safe side, and not say anything for the present, until I can see how the ground lies. It would not be fair towards my darling Reata to run the risk of losing anything that might come to me from my aunt. I must talk it over with Reata, and try to make her understand our position. Of course she knows nothing about the value of money yet;—how should she? she has never had any in her hands. But supposing she should not want to keep a secret from the old lady, if she should exert that will of hers? But no, there is no fear of that.” And Otto, alone as he was in the darkness, smiled at the recollection of her soft confiding look. How easily she had given way to the first thing he had asked of her!

Yes,—his Reata was an angel, a priceless gem; and everything would be right somehow, Otto murmured to himself, incoherently. When would he see her again?

Would he ever reach that confounded farmhouse?

He had soon talked himself back into a glow of delight; but far down in the depths of his soul there was a faint feeling of unrest. A chord had been touched which would not cease to vibrate, and every now and then jarred on the sweet music of his love. It was as if the first little cloud, weak and fleecy, but still a cloud, had risen on the spotless heaven of his happiness.

That confounded farmhouse was reached at last, but not till after what seemed to Otto an eternity.

A low broad-roofed building, standing within a rough palisade. Otto saw a light gleaming through the half-open door—heard a wild confused barking, as a cascade of dogs came rushing out; and then, as he stepped in, there was a delightful sensation of sudden warmth and shelter from the stormy elements.

Reata was sitting before a great roaring fire, in the place of honour, the farmer's family grouped round her in attitudes of picturesque reverence. She started up with a cry of delight; and the first glance of her eyes swept all worldly considerations out of Otto's head.

The dogs—great shaggy starved-looking beasts, with a wolfish taint about them—came in snarling at his heels.

"Down, all of you!" said Reata, addressing them in Spanish. "Come here directly, *Reganon*. You know you are the worst dog. The others are bad enough; but you are far the worst. You are to sit down here near me. Couch, sir!"

"Is that meant for me also?" asked Otto, suiting the action to the word, and looking up from his sitting posture into her face.

"Oh, how cold you are, and how wet!" she said, laying her hand lightly on his sleeve, clammy and drenched with moisture. "And you are shivering too."

He could feel the warmth of her little hand on his arm, and longed to seize it, and hold it as he had held it once to-day. But the conventional uses of society will keep their sway even in a Mexican farmhouse; and, with half-a-dozen faces turned towards them, Otto had to control his impulses, and content himself with peaceful adoration.

The storm reached its climax with a burst of tremendous power, which dwarfed all its previous fury into insignificance. As the stupendous blast swept with ruthless ferocity over the roof, and amidst the hell of sounds, the heavy crash of a forest-tree was heard hard by the door. A powerful tree it must have been, by the way the ground trembled beneath its descending weight.

All within the hut were wrapt in breathless fear. The old Mexican farmer crossed himself, and drew his grandchildren towards him; the woman fell on her knees, and prayed aloud; one of the girls put her apron up to her eyes, and sobbed; Reata slipped her fingers into Otto's, drawing a little closer to him; and the worst of the three bad dogs glared with his yellow eyes, and gave forth a low deep growl.

"Don't be frightened, my darling, you are with me," said Otto, with a lover's proud protection, when the deafening roar would let him speak. "You need never fear a storm again; for I shall always be near you—we shall always be together."

And her eyes answered him—"Always together!"

CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE.

VI. FRENCH NOVELS.

THERE can be no question that the French have a talent for novel-writing. With much in him that is eminently practical, when it comes to matters of hard, prosaic business, the Frenchman is theoretically and superficially romantic. In spirit and temperament he is emotional, and his feelings are lightly stirred to ebullition. He may profess himself a freethinker and *esprit fort*, yet *en revanche* he carries a religion of his own into the domestic relations. He may be an indifferent son or worse, yet he is eloquent of ecstatic adoration of his mother; and in talking of "that saint," especially if he have buried her, his eyes will overflow at a moment's notice. So comprehensive is the sympathy between mother and child, that he will reckon on it with pleasant confidence in those unseparated affairs of the heart, as to which an Englishman is discreetly reserved. He may be close in his everyday money dealings, and in the habit of practising somewhat shabby economics; yet if he can *pose* as the victim of a grand passion, he will take a positive pleasure in launching into follies. He may have a superfluity of volatile sentimentality, but he has no false shame; and his everyday manners are ostentatiously symptomatic of that. While an Englishman nods a cool good-bye to a friend, or parts with a quiet grasp of the hand, Alphonse throws himself into the arms of Adolphe, presses him to his embroidered shirt-front, and, finally, embraces him on either cheek. So it is in public business or in politics, where his first thought is generally for effect, and he is perpetually

translating romance into action. Like Jules Favre at Ferrières, weeping over the misfortunes and humiliations of his country; uttering the noble sentiments of a Demosthenes or a Cato; practising the tones and gestures he had patriotically studied beforehand; and even, according to the German gossip, artificially blanching his features like early asparagus, or some actor of the Porte St Martin, with the notion of touching the iron Chancellor. In short, the Frenchman has instinctive aptitudes for the dramatic, and an uncontrollable bent towards high-flown pathos. He is ready to strike an attitude at a moment's notice, and to figure with dignified self-respect and *aplomb* in scenes that might strike us as ludicrously compromising. But though that mobility of character has its ridiculous side in the eyes of people who are naturally colder and more phlegmatic, undoubtedly it serves him well when he betakes himself to the literature of the fancy. The imaginative faculties, which are perpetually in play, need regulation and control rather than stimulating. The quick conception conjures up the effects which must be laboriously wrought out by duller imaginations; and he sees and avoids those difficulties in the plot which inferior ingenuity might find insurmountable. He can throw himself with slight preparation into rôles that seem foreign to his own; and though in feminine parts he may be somewhat artificial, yet he can give the impression all the same of being fairly at home in them. While the prosaic element that underlies his versatility is

powerful enough to contrast with his poetry and correct it. He has practical ambitions of one kind or another, which he follows with all the candour of self-interest or selfishness, so that we are likely to find in his literary labours a judicious blending of the real with the ideal.

In the drama the superiority of the French is of course incontestable; and our English play-wrights have recognised it by adapting or appropriating wholesale. In fiction, notwithstanding our remarks as to the Frenchman's natural aptitudes, we must admit that there is more room for differences of opinion. Indeed the two schools are so broadly opposed that it is difficult to institute satisfactory comparisons between them; and though individual English writers may be largely indebted to the French for the refinements that make the chief charm of their works, yet for obvious reasons our duller novelists dare hardly copy closely. In the infancy of the art there can be little doubt that English authors had it all their own way; and though we may possibly be blinded by national prejudice, we believe we may claim the greatest names in fiction. Nothing could be more tedious or more false to nature than the French romantic pastorals of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, except those interminable romances by Scudery and others, which had so great a vogue in the literary circles of their time; or the insipid licentiousness of the younger Crébillon. Voltaire had to thank his residence in England, and the influence of English companionships, with his studies in English literature, for the most telling of those inimitable romances, whose brevity is at once their beauty and their blemish. While 'Gil Blas' will be read to all eternity, because Le Sage, like Fielding, painted human nature precisely as it

was, and always must be. Our most illustrious novelists are illustrious indeed. We confess we have never appreciated Richardson; everybody must agree with Johnson, that if you read him simply for the story you would hang yourself; and we have always far preferred to his 'Pamela' Fielding's admirable satire on it in 'Joseph Andrews.' But Fielding and Smollett; Scott, Thackeray, and Dickens; Lord Lytton and George Eliot, with others we might possibly add to the list, are wellnigh unapproachable in their different lines. Yet with us the art of the novel-writer has been on the whole declining, though there are living writers who keep alive the best traditions of the craft. In fact the race of novel-scribblers has been multiplying so rapidly that almost necessarily the average of the execution has been lowered, since the general scramble and rush have tended inevitably to crude conceptions and hasty workmanship. With the French, it has been rather the reverse; and while the races of their dramatists, historians, and poets have been dying out, their romance-writing, in spite of its offences against morals, has rather advanced than declined.

That is partly, perhaps, though it may sound paradoxical, because novel-reading is far less universal among the French than with us. The Stage in France has exceptional encouragement. The leading metropolitan houses are subsidised by the State with the general assent or approval of the nation. Each little town has its little theatre; at all events it is visited by some strolling company, and all the world flocks to the performances. Most Frenchmen have something of the makings of an actor in them; and each Frenchman and Frenchwoman is a fairly capable critic. A successful play makes its author's reputation

at once, to say nothing of filling his pockets ; and as the people insist upon novelties in some shape, there must be a constant supply of some kind of pieces. But the French are not a reading people. There is no place among them for the circulating library system, and poverty-stricken novels by anonymous writers would fall still-born from the press, if they found a publisher. A certain number of better-educated people buy those paper-stitched books at three francs and a half, which quickly, when they have any success, run through many successive editions. But in times of trouble and political agitation, the novel-market may be absolutely stagnant—a thing which is altogether inconceivable in England. Not that the French can dispense with amusement, even in the depths of national sorrow and humiliation ; only they prefer to seek the indispensable distraction in entertainments which are at once more exciting and congenial. Thus there was literally nothing new to be bought in the way of a novel during the days of the German invasion and the Commune, or for the year or two that succeeded. Yet we remember on the occasion of a visit to Paris, arriving the day after the German evacuation, when we asked if any places of amusement were open, several of the lighter theatres had recommenced the usual performances, and we applied for a *fauteuil* at the Bouffes Parisiennes. The pretty little comic theatre was so crowded that we had to make interest for a chair at one of the side-doors ; the audience were shrieking over the humours of Desiré, and no one was more jovially interested than the officers in uniform in the gallery. The trait seems to us to be strikingly characteristic. The nation, amid its calamities and pecuniary straits,

was so indifferent even to the lightest novel-reading, that it ceased to spend money in books, although rushing in crowds to fill the theatres. But in calmer times there is a select and comparatively discriminating circle of readers. When minds are easy and money tolerably plentiful, there are many people who make a point of buying the latest publication that is vouched for by the name of some writer of repute ; recommended by their favourite journals or the 'Revue des Deux Mondes,' and displayed in the book-shops and on the stalls at the railway stations. Every writer must make a beginning, or an author sometimes, though rarely, may write anonymously ; but it may generally be taken for granted that he has shown some signs of talent. Before he has been encouraged to publish in form, he has probably tried his powers in some *feuilleton* in a provincial newspaper, or attained a certain credit for cleverness in the society of some *café-coterie*. At all events the ordeal, with the odds against succeeding in it, exclude many who with us would hurry into type ; and the Frenchmen, we believe, are practical enough never to pay for the privilege of publishing. While in France the rougher sex has pretty much kept the field to itself. There has been only one George Sand, though we do not forget Mrs Craven. Indeed, setting the restraints of delicacy aside, the ladies would be more at a disadvantage there than with us. The stars of the *demi-monde* seldom shiné, even in penmanship and orthography ; while ladies of more decent life and reputation dare scarcely pretend to the indispensable intimacy with the *détails scabreux* of the *vie de garçon* ; with the interiors of cabinets in restaurants in the boulevards ; with

parties of *baccarat* in the Cercles or the *Chaussée d'Antin*; with the flirtations in the side-scenes, *doubles entendres* of the slips, and the humours of the Casinos and the *Bals de l'Opéra*.

This selection of what in a certain sense is the fittest, has helped to maintain the average workmanship of the French novel; but if it is become far more agreeable reading in the last generation or two, there are very evident reasons for that. The novels by the old masters were altogether artificial. Not only were they prolix and intolerably monotonous, but they transported one into worlds as surprising and unfamiliar as those in which Jules Verne has sought his sensations; or at all events, they idealised our actual world beyond possibility of recognition. To do them justice, with such notorious exceptions as *Crebillon* and *Le Clos, Prévot* and *Louvet*, they are for the most part moral enough. They are in the habit, indeed, of exaggerating the virtues of their heroes beyond all the limits of the credible; although their authors might have been dancing attendance in the antechambers of Versailles, when the king attended the *lever* of his mistress in state, and when retreats like the *Parc-aux-Cerfs* were among the cherished institutions of the monarchy. Even when professing to study Arcadian simplicity, they still exaggerated sentiment, and refined on the refinements of nature. It is the accomplished *Bernardin de Saint Pierre* who may be said to have inaugurated the period of transition; and he had the courage to break away from the confirmed traditions. He had the soul of a poet, and was an adept in the art that succeeds in concealing art. As you breathe the balmy languor of the tropics, you abandon your-

self to the seductions of his glowing style and the impassioned graces of his luxuriant fancy. Should you give yourself over unreflectingly to the spirit of the story, there is no *arrière-pensée* of discordant impressions; and the proof is, that when the book has delighted you in boyhood, you never lose your feelings of affectionate regard for it. Yet we suspect that were you first to make acquaintance with it in later life, when experience has made a man colder and more critical, the sense of the ascendancy of the theatrical element would repress the reader's warm enthusiasm and work against the spells of the writer. We may believe in the luxuriance of that tropical scenery, glancing in all the hues of the rainbow under the most brilliant sunshine; but the story, with its sentiment, would seem an idyl of the imagination which could never have had its counterpart in actual life. It might strike us, we fancy, like a picture by a clever French artist, which we remember admiring in the *Salon*, and at the Vienna Exhibition. As a picture, nothing could be more prettily conceived; the drowned Virginia was peacefully reposing on the shingle, between the wavelets that were gently lapping against the beach, and the picturesque precipices in the background. But though the body must have been tossed upon the surge through the storm, the clinging draperies were decently disposed; there was neither bruise nor scratch on the angelic features; and hair and neck ornaments were artistically arranged in the studied negligence of a careless slumber.

But the modern French novel, since the time of *Saint Pierre*, has been becoming more and more characterised by an intensity of realism. We do not say that there is not often to the full as much

false sentiment as ever; and we have mad and spasmodic fantasias of the passions, played out with eccentric variations on the whole gamut of the sensibilities. But even the writers who most freely indulge in those liberties have generally taken their stand on some basis of the positive. What we have rather to complain of is, that the most popular authors show a morbid inclination for what is harrowing or repulsive; or they seek novel sensations in those perversions of depravity over which consideration for humanity would desire to draw a veil. The sins and the sorrows of feeble nature must always play a conspicuous part in the highest fiction, where the author is searching out the depths of the heart; but grace should be the handmaid of artistic genius; and the born artist will show the delicacy of his power by idealising operations in moral chirurgery. Following the downward career of some unfortunate victim may lead a man incidentally to the *Morgue*; but we cannot understand making the *Morgue* his haunt of predilection, or voluptuously breathing the atmosphere of that chamber of the dead, when all the world lies open before you, with its scenes of peace and beauty and innocence.

Some of the most realistic of these writers, notably M. Zola, have affected to defend themselves on high moral grounds. Next to the duty, conscientiously discharged, of depicting life as they find it, it is their purpose to deter from the practice of vice, by painting its horrors and its baleful consequences. That argument may be good to a certain extent; but it cannot be stretched to cover the point in question. We can understand the Spartan fathers making a show of the drunken Helot; we can understand the rather disgusting series of drawings

of "The Bottle," which George Cruikshank etched, as the advocate of total abstinence. Drunkenness, or excess in strong liquors, is acknowledged one of the crying evils of the age, and all weapons are good by which such social perils may be combated. But nothing but unmitigated mischief can be done by even faintly indicating to innocence and inexperience the corruptions which are happily altogether exceptional. The real aim of these self-styled moralists is to excite sensation of the most immoral kind; or to show their perverted ingenuity in interesting the jaded voluptuary; and nothing proved that more than some of the novels which were the first to appear after the fall of the Empire. As we remarked, there was an interval during the war, and afterwards, when novels were at a discount, since nobody cared to buy. Then came the revival, and such a revival! The fashion of the day had taken a turn towards the asceticism of republican manners, and France, purified by prolonged suffering, was to enter on the grand task of regeneration. Certain clever novel-writers, who had been condemned to forced inactivity, saw their opportunity, and hastened to avail themselves of it. Nothing could be more transparent than the hypocrisy of their brief prefaces, which were the only really moral portion of their books. Recognising their grave responsibilities as censors, and protesting the single-minded purity of their intentions, they proceeded to reproduce the society of Imperial Paris for the purpose of denouncing and satirising it. That society, no doubt, was sufficiently frivolous, sensual, and dissipated. But those writers were not content with reviving it as it had appeared to the people who casually mixed in it: they were not even

satisfied with painting sin as they saw it on the surface, and dealing with the sinners in vague generalities. They gave their imaginations loose rein, letting them revel in exceptional horrors and absurdities ; and presenting social and political notorieties under the flimsiest disguises, they misrepresented their sufficiently discreditable biographies with circumstantial and pointed malignity. It is difficult to imagine a fouler prostitution of talent than the invention of atrocities that are to be scathed with your satire. We entirely agree with the dictum of a shrewd contemporary French critic—"that the aim of the romance-writer ought to be to present the agreeable or existing spectacle of the passions or humours of the world at large ; but that he should take care at the same time that the picture of passion is never more corrupting than the passion itself." And the remark was elicited by the reluctant confession, that that rule is more honoured among his countrymen in the breach than in the observance.

For there is no denying, we fear, that the trail of the serpent is over most of the recent French novels of any mark. Occasionally, indeed, it shows itself but faintly ; and then, nevertheless, it may make an exceptionally disagreeable impression, because it seems almost gratuitously out of place. It would appear that the writers who are most habitually pure feel bound by self-respect to show, on occasion, that they do not write purely from lack of knowledge, and that they are as much men of this wicked world as their more audacious neighbours. Nor is crowning by the Academy a guarantee of virtue, though it is a recognition of talent that the author may be proud of, and assures his book a lucrative circulation. All it absolutely implies, from the moral point of view,

is that the novel is not flagrantly scandalous ; and so far as that goes, the name of any author of note is generally a sufficient indication of the tone of his stories. Now and then a Theophile Gautier may forget himself in such a brilliant *jeu des sens* as his 'Mademoiselle de Maupin ;' but the French novelist, as a rule, takes a line and sticks to it, carefully developing by practice and thought what he believes to be his peculiar talent. And whatever may be the moral blemishes of the French novel—though they may be often false to art by being false to nature, notwithstanding the illusion of their superficial realism, there can be no question of their average superiority to our own in care of construction and delicacy of finish. The modern French novelist, as a rule, does not stretch his story on a Procrustean bed, racking it out to twice its natural length, and thereby enfeebling it proportionately. He publishes in a single manageable volume, which may be in type that is large or small *à discretion*. Not only is he not obliged to hustle in characters, for the mere sake of filling his canvas, but he is naturally inclined to limit their number. In place of digressing into superfluous episodes and side-scenes for the sake of spinning out the volumes to regulation length, he is almost bound over to condense and concentrate. Thus there is no temptation to distract attention from the hero, who presents himself naturally in the opening chapter, and falls as naturally into the central place ; while the other people group themselves modestly behind him. Consequently the plot is simple where there is a plot ; and where there is no plot, in the great majority of cases we have a consistent study of a selected type. Each separate chapter shows evidences of care and patience. The writer

seems to have more or less identified himself with the individuality he has imagined; and no doubt that has been the case. Nineteen novels out of twenty in England are the careless distractions of leisure time by men or women who are working up waste materials. In France it would appear to be just the opposite. Thoughtful students of the art take to novel-writing as a business. They practise the business on acknowledged principles, and according to certain recognised traditions, though they may lay themselves out to hit the fashions of the times, like the fashionable jewellers and dressmakers. So that the story, as it slowly takes form in their minds, is wrought in harmony throughout with its original conception. There may occasionally be distinguished exceptions, but they only prove the general rule. Thus Zola is said to give his mornings to his novels, while he devotes the afternoons to journalism; and Claretie, who is as much of a press man as a novelist, mars excellent work that might be better still, by the inconsistencies, oversights, and pieces of slovenliness that may be attributed to the distracting variety of his occupations.

Then, as the French novelists are Parisian almost to a man, their novels are monotonously Parisian in their tone, as they are thoroughly French in their spirit. The system of centralisation that has been growing and strengthening has been attracting the intellect and ambition of the country to its heart. It is in the Paris of the present republic as in the Paris of the monarchies and the Empire, that fame, honours, and places are to be won; and where the only life is to be lived that a Frenchman thinks worth the living. The ornaments of the literary as of the political coteries are either Parisians born or bred; or they are

young provincials, who have found their way to the capital when the mind and senses are most impressionable. Many of these clever youths have seen nothing of "society" till they have taken their line and made their name. Too many of them decline to be bored by either respectability or an observance of conventionalities; even if they had admission to the drawing-rooms they would rarely avail themselves of it, except for the sake of the social flattery implied; and they take their only notions of women from the ladies of a certain class. If they are "devouring" a modest patrimony or making an income by their ready pens, they spend it in the dissipation of a *vie orageuse*. So we have fancies inspired by the champagne of noisy suppers towards the small hours; and moral reflections suggested by absinthe, in the gloomy reaction following on debauch. In the scenes from the life of some *petit crevé* or *lorette*, you have the Boulevards and the Bois de Boulogne; the supper at the Maison Dorée, the breakfast at the Café Riche; the frenzied pool at *lansquenet* or *baccarat*; the flirtations at the fancy balls of the opera; the humours of the *foyers*, the journal offices, and the *cafés*,—described with a liveliness that leaves little to desire, if the accomplished author have the necessary *verve*. But those views of life are all upon the surface, and they are as absolutely wanting in breadth as in variety. The writer takes his colours from the people he associates with; and these are either too busy to think, or else they are morbidly disillusioned. They talk a jargon of their world, and try to act in conformity; the philosophy they profess to practise is shallow hypocrisy and transparent self-deception; if there is anything of which they are heartily ashamed, it is the betrayal

of some sign of genuine feeling. The writer who nurses his brain on absinthe and cognac, knows little of the finer emotions of our nature; and yet, to do justice to his philosophical omniscience, he may feel bound to imagine and analyse these. Then imagination must take the place of reproduction, and the realistic shades harshly into the ideal. We have chapters where we are in the full rattle of *coupés*, the jingling of glasses and the clink of napoleons; and we have others alternating with them, where some stage-struck hero is meditating his amorous misadventures or *bonnes fortunes*; contemplating suicide in a melodramatic paroxysm of despair, or indulging in raptures of serene self-gratulation. And these stories, though extravagant in their representations of the feelings, may be real to an extreme in their action and in their framework; yet, as we said before, in construction and execution they may command the approval of the most fastidious of critics. While, as we need hardly add, there are authors *hors de ligne*, whose genius and profound acquaintance with mankind are not circumscribed by the *octroi* of Paris.

Where painstaking writers of something more than respectable mediocrity often show themselves at their best, is in the special knowledge they are apt to be ashamed of. The provincial who has gone to school in the *cafés* of the capital, was born and brought up in very different circumstances. He remembers the farm-steadings in Normandy or La Beauce, he remembers the stern solitudes of the Landes or the Breton heaths, the snows and the pine-forests of the Pyrenees or the Jura, the grey olive-groves of Provence, and the sunny vineyards of the Gironde. He recalls the dull provincial town where he went to college; where the *maire* was a per-

sonage and the *sous-préfet* a demi-god, and where a Sunday on the promenade or a *chasse* in the environs seemed the summit of human felicity. Probably he had been in love in good earnest in these days; and the remembrance of that first freshness of passion comes keenly back to him, like the breath of the spring. It is somewhat humiliating, no doubt, the having to revive those rustic memories, the more so that the world and your jealous friends are likely to identify you with the incidents of your romance. But after all, necessity exacts originality, and a vein of veracity means money and gratifying consideration; and then there is honourable precedent for his condescension. Did not Balzac include the *vie de province* in the innumerable volumes of the 'Comédie Humaine?' With some simple study of a quiet human life, we have charming sketches of picturesque nature, that might have come from the brush of a Corot or a Jules Breton. More generally, however, the nature in the French novel reminds one rather of the stage-painter than the lover of the country; and there they fall far short of the average of second-class English work. Many of our indifferent English novels have been written in quiet parsonages and country-houses, and the most pleasing parts of them are those in which the author describes the fields that he wanders in or the garden he loves. Besides, every Englishman in easy circumstances makes a point of taking his annual holiday, and passes it in the Alps, by the sea, or in the Highlands. While the Frenchman, or the Parisian at least, is content, like Paul de Kock, to adore the *coteaux* of the Seine or the woods of the *banlieue*. Exceedingly pretty in their way, no doubt; but where the turf is strewn with orange-peel and the fragments of

*brioche*s; where you gallop on donkeys as on Hampstead Heath; and where the notes of the singing-birds are lost in the shrieks from some boisterous French counterpart of kiss-in-the-ring. The Cockney artists have their colony at Fontainebleau; and it would be well if their brothers the novelists had some suburban school of the kind. But not to mention George Sand for the present, who sunned herself in the beauties of nature with the genuine transports of sympathetic appreciation, there are always a few delightful exceptions; for the French artist, when he cares for the country at all, can paint it with a rare refinement of grace. There is Gabriel Ferry, who is the traveller of romance; there is Edmund About, who showed his cosmopolitan versatility in making Hymettus and the Roman Campagna as real to his countrymen as their Mont Valerien or the Plain of St Denis; there was Dumas, whose lively 'Impressions de Voyage' are as likely to live as anything he has written, but who, unfortunately, with his vivid power of imagination, is never absolutely to be trusted. They say that, having described his scenes in the 'Peninsula of Sinai' at second hand from the notes of a friend, he was so captivated by the seductions of his fanciful sketches, as to decide at once on a visit to the convent. There are MM. Erckmann-Chatrian, in such a book especially as their 'Maison Forestière'; there is Sandeau, to whom we have already made allusion; and last, though not least, there is André Theuriet. M. Theuriet, although much admired in France—and that says something for the good taste and discrimination of his countrymen—is, we fancy, but little read in England. Yet, putting the exquisite finish of his simple subjects out of the question, no one is a more fascinating guide and companion to

the nooks and sequestered valleys in the French woodlands. We know nothing more pleasing than the bits in his 'Raymonde,' beginning with the episode of the mushroom-hunter among his mushrooms; and there are things that are scarcely inferior in his latest story.

France was the natural birthplace of the sensational novel, and the sensational novel as naturally associates itself with the names and fame of Sue and Dumas. Whatever their faults, these writers exercised an extraordinary fascination, abroad as well as at home, and their works lost little or nothing in the translation. We should be ungrateful if we did not acknowledge the debt we owed them, for awakening in us the keenest interest and sentiment in days when the mind is most impressionable. We did not read Sue for his political and social theories, nor Balzac for his psychological analysis. We saw no glaring improbabilities in the achievements of Dumas' 'Three Musketeers'; though we did resent the table of proportion which made a musketeer equal to two of the Cardinal's guards, and a Cardinal's guardsman to two Englishmen. We preferred such a soul-thrilling story as the 'History of the Thirteen,' to 'Balthazar Claes' or the 'Peau de Chagrin'; but we devoured very indiscriminately all the great French romances of the day; and thousands and tens of thousands of our youthful countrymen paid a similarly practical tribute to the powers of the Frenchmen who undoubtedly for a time filled the foremost places in the ranks of the novelist's guild in Europe. Eugene Sue had seen something of the world before he settled to literature and took up his residence in Paris. He began life as an army surgeon, and subsequently he served in the

navy. He broke ground with the sea pieces, which gave good promise of his future career; but he made a positive furor by his publication of the 'Mysteries of Paris,' which had been honoured with an introduction through the columns of the 'Débats'—to be followed by the 'Wandering Jew' and 'Martin the Foundling.' Sue possessed, in exaggeration and excess, the most conspicuous qualities we have attributed to the French novelists. His imagination was rather inflamed than merely warm. In the resolution with which he laid his hands upon social sores he anticipated the harsh realism of Zola. His construction was a triumph of intricate ingenuity; and he never contented himself with a mere handful of characters, who might be managed and manoeuvred with comparative ease. On the contrary, he worked his involved machinery by a complication—by wheels within wheels; and his characters were multiplied beyond all precedent. The action of his novels is as violent as it is sustained; yet the interest is seldom suffered to flag. He is always extravagant, and often absurdly so; and yet—thanks to the pace at which he hurries his readers along—he has the knack of imprinting a certain *vraisemblance* on everything. Not unfrequently, as with Victor Hugo, the grandiose with Sue is confounded with the ludicrous,—as where, in that wonderful prologue to the 'Wandering Jew,' the male and female pilgrims of misery part on the confines of the opposite continents, and, nodding their leave-taking across the frozen straits, turn on their heels respectively, and stride away over the snow-fields. It is easy enough to put that hyperdramatic incident in a ridiculous light; and yet it is more than an effort to laugh when you are reading it. And so it is in some

degree with the adventures of Rudolph and his faithful Murphy in the 'Mysteries of Paris.' For a man who knows anything practically of the science of the ring, and of the indispensable handicapping of light weights and heavy weights, it is impossible to believe that his slightly-made Serene Highness could knock the formidable Maître d'Ecole out of time with a couple of well-planted blows. Nor do we believe it; and yet somehow we follow the adventures of Rudolph with the lively curiosity that comes of a faith in him, though improbabilities are heightened by his habit of intoxicating himself on the vitriolised alcohol of the most poverty-stricken *cabarets*. Sue understood the practice of contrast, though he exaggerated in that as in everything else. As Rudolph would leave his princely residence in disguise to hazard himself in the modern *Cours des Miracles*, so we are hurried from the dens of burglars and the homes of the deserving poor to *petites maisons* and halls of dazzling light, hung with the rarest paintings and richest tapestries, and deadened to the footfall by the softest carpets. Dramatic suggestions naturally arose out of such violently impressive situations. Vice could work its criminal will, while innocence and virtue were bribed or coerced. Then these social inequalities lent themselves naturally to the socialist teachings of his later years; and the fortunate proprietor of a magnificent chateau expatiated, with the eloquence of honest indignation, on the atrocious disparities of class and caste. Sue had his reward in his lifetime in the shape of money and fame; and though his novels have almost ceased to be read, his influence survives, and, as we fear, is likely to live.

Dumas was a more remarkable man than Sue,—with his inex-

haustible and insatiable capacity for work, and an imagination that was unflagging within certain limits. He was happy in the combination, so rare in a Frenchman, of an iron frame and excellent health, with as strong literary inspiration and an equally robust fancy. If he was vain to simplicity, and provoked ridicule and rebuffs, it must be confessed that he had some reason for vanity ; and it was on the principle of *l'audace, et toujours de l'audace*, that he made hosts of friends in high places, and a really remarkable position. As his witty son undutifully observed of him, he was capable of getting up behind his own carriage, that he might make society believe that he kept a black footman. He was the typical Frenchman in many respects, and above all, the typical French romance-writer. He had actually a vast store of miscellaneous and desultory reading of the lighter kind ; he mingled freely in society with all manner of men and women ; he had a good though singularly unreliable memory, which he professed to trust on all occasions. Nothing is more naively characteristic of the man than a confession he makes, involuntarily, in the amusing little volume he entitles 'Mes Bêtes.' He is explaining and justifying his marvellous facility of production. He attributes it to the fact that he never forgets anything, and need waste none of his precious time in hunting through his bookshelves. And by way of illustration, in the next two or three pages he makes several most flagrant historical blunders. That gives one the measure of his accuracy in the series of historical romances from which so many people have taken all they know of French history in the days of the League and the Fronde. Yet if the narrative is a wonderful travesty of actual events

—if the portraits of Valois and Guises are as false to the originals as the Louis XI. of Scott and Victor Hugo is faithful—the scenes are none the less vividly dramatic ; while the conversation or the gossip amuses us just as much as if they did not abound in errors and anachronisms. His 'Monte Christo' had all the gorgeous extravagance of an Eastern tale, though the scenes passed in the latitudes of Paris and the Mediterranean ; and we may see how the ideas grew in the conception, although, characteristically, the author never had patience to go back to correct his discrepancies in proportion. The treasure of the Roman cardinals that was concealed in the cavern, though enough to tempt the cupidity of a mediæval pope, would never have sufficed to the magnificent adventurer through more than some half-dozen years. Yet, after lavishing gold and priceless gems by the handful, when we take leave of Monte Christo at last, he is still many times a French millionaire ; and the probabilities otherwise have been so well preserved, that, as in the case of Eugene Sue, we have never thought of criticising.

But one of Dumas' most original ideas took an eminently practical direction. His unprecedented energy and power of work made him absolutely insatiable in producing. So he showed speculative invention as well as rare originality in constituting himself the director of a literary workshop on a very extensive scale. Other authors, like MM. Erckmann-Chatrian, have gone into literary partnership, and a curious puzzle it is as to how they distribute their responsibility. But it was reserved for Dumas to engage a staff of capable yet retiring *collaborateurs*, as other men employ clerks and amanuenses. His vanity, sensitive as it was,

stooped to his standing sponsor to the inferior workmanship of M. Auguste Macquet et Cie. The books might be of unequal merit—some of them were drawn out to unmistakable dullness—yet none were so poor as to be positively discreditable. And the strange thing was, that they took their colour from the mind of the master, as they closely indicated his characteristic style. While to this day, notwithstanding the disclosures of the lawsuits that gratified the jealousy of his enemies and rivals, we are left in very considerable doubt as to the parts undertaken by the different performers.

It was a notion that could never have occurred to Victor Hugo. No French author lends himself so easily to parody; and a page or two of high-flown phrases, where the sense is altogether lost in the sound, may provoke a smile as a clever imitation. But though Hugo is always reminding us of the line, that "Great wits are sure to madness near allied," he really is a great wit, a profound thinker, a magnificent writer, and, above all, an extraordinary dramatic genius. Although, latterly, there is almost as much that is absurd in what he has written as in what he has said, there is nothing about him that is mean or little. He has the conscience and enthusiasm of his art as of his political convictions. And we could as soon conceive some grand sculptor leaving the noble figure his genius has blocked out to be finished by the clumsy hands of his apprentices, as Hugo handing over his ideas to the manipulation of his most sympathetic disciples. He at least, among contemporary Frenchmen, rises to the ideal of the loftiest conceptions, and yet his noblest characters are strictly conceivable. Take, for example, the trio in the tale of the 'Quatre-vingt-treize'—

Lantenac, Gauvain, and the stern republican Cimourdain, who sits calmly discoursing, on the eve of the execution, with the beloved pupil he has condemned to the guillotine. In romance as in the drama, Hugo sways the feelings with the strength and confidence of a giant, exulting in his intellectual superiority. It is true that he not unfrequently overtasks himself—sometimes his scenes are too thrillingly terrible—sometimes they border on the repulsive, and very frequently on the grotesque. Yet even the grotesque, in the hands of Hugo, may be made, as we have seen, extremely pathetic; and the pathos is artistically heightened by some striking effect of contrast. The Quasimodo in his 'Notre Dame' is a soulless and deformed monster, who resents the outrages of a brutal age by regarding all men, save one, with intense malignity. His distorted features and deformed body provoke laughter, and consequently insult, so naturally, that, by merely showing his hideous face in a window-frame, he wins the honours of the *Pape aux fous*. Yet what can be more moving than when, bound hand and foot in the pillory, the helpless mute rolls his solitary eye in search of some sympathy among the jeering mob? or the change that works itself in his dull feelings when the graceful Esmeralda comes to quench his thirst with the water she raises to his blackened lips? Hugo is essentially French in his follies as well as his powers; his political dreams are as wild as they might be dangerous: yet he is an honour to his country, not only by his genius, but by the habitual consecration of his wonderful gifts to what he honestly believes to be the noblest purposes.

Neither Balzac nor Sand will be soon replaced. For the former, it is seldom in the history of literature

that we can look for so keen and subtle an analyst of the passions, frailties, and follies of humanity. In the everyday business of life he showed a strange lack of common-sense; but fortunately for his contemporaries and posterity, he had the intelligence to recognise his vocation. What a range of varied and absorbing interest—of searching and suggestive philosophical speculation—of shrewd incisive satirical observation—would have been lost to the world if the eccentric author of the '*Comédie Humaine*' had been forced to take his place among the notaries he found reason so heartily to detest! The originality of his manner of regarding men was as great as the spasmodic *élan* of his energy was tremendous, when his necessities felt the spur, and his fancies fell in with his necessities. Balzac dashed off his books by inspiration, if ever novelist did. What varied profundity of original thought, what delicate refinements of mental analysis, often go to a single chapter! The arrangement of ideas is as lucid as the language is precise and vigorous. Yet we know that when Balzac locked his door for more than a round of the clock, filliping the nerves and flagging brain with immoderate doses of the strongest coffee, the pen must have been flying over the paper. His vast reserves of reflection and observation placed themselves at his disposal almost without an effort; and the characters were sketched in faithful detail by the penetrating instinct whose perceptions were so infallible.

George Sand has been more missed than Balzac, because she could vary her subjects and manner to suit almost every taste. Universally read, she was universally admired; and she pleased the fastidious as she entertained the many. An accomplished mistress of the

graces of style, her language was wonderfully nervous and flexible. In her way she was almost as much of the poet as Hugo, though her poetry was lyric and idyllic in place of epic. She could never have written so well and so long had she not had an individuality of extraordinary versatility. In a romance of the passions like her '*Indiana*' or her '*Jacques*,' she is as thoroughly at home as Balzac himself; while she throws herself into the feminine parts with all the sympathetic ardour of a nature semi-tropical like *Indiana's*. While in such a story as the '*Flammarande*,' which was her latest work, and in which she showed not the faintest symptom of decline, she confines herself severely to the character of the half-educated steward, rejecting all temptations to indulge herself in the vein of her personality. For once, though the scenes are laid in most romantic landscapes, we have none of the inimitable descriptions in which she delights. She merely indicates the picturesque surroundings of the solitary castle in the rocky wilderness, leaving it to our imagination to fill in the rest. What she could do in the way of painting, when sitting down to a favourite study she gave herself over to her bent, we see in the '*Petite Fadette*,' '*La Mare d'Auteuil*,' '*Nanette*,' and a score of similar stories. The simplest materials served for the tale, which owed half its charm to her affection for the country. The woman who had wandered about the streets of Paris in masculine attire, who had a strong dash of the city Bohemian in her nature; who loved in after-life to fill her *salons* with all who were most famous in literature and the arts, was never so happy as when living in *villeggiatura* among the fields and the woodlands she had loved from childhood. The old

mill with its lichen-grown gables and venerable wheel; the pool among flags and sedges, sleeping under the shadows of the alders; the brook tumbling down in tiny cascades and breaking over the moss-covered boulders; nay, the tame stretch of low-lying meadowland, with its sluices and clumps of formal poplars,—all stand out in her pages, like landscapes by Ruysdael or Hobbema. And we believe that these simple though exquisitely finished pictures will survive, with a peasant or two and a village maiden for the figures in their foregrounds, when more pretentious works, that nevertheless deserved their success, have been forgotten with the books that have been honoured by the Academy.

Among the most prolific of the novelists who have died no long time ago,—hardly excepting Dumas, Balzac, or Sand,—and who have been largely read by our middle-aged contemporaries, is our old acquaintance Paul de Kock. Paul de Kock had a bad name for his immorality, and doubtless in a measure he deserved it. It is certain that if an expurgated edition of his voluminous works were collected for English family reading, it would shrink into comparatively modest proportions. But Paul, with all his faults and freedoms, did very little harm, and certainly he afforded a great deal of amusement. He was guilty of none of those insidious attacks on morality which have been the *spécialité* of some of his most notorious successors. He never tasked the resources of a depraved imagination in refining on those sins which scandalise even sinners. He never wrapped up in fervid and graceful language those subtle and foul suggestions that work in the system like slow poison. He was really the honest *bourgeois* which M. Zola gives himself out

to be. He boldly advertised his wares for what they were, and manufactured and multiplied them according to sample. He sold a somewhat coarse and strong-flavoured article, but at least he guaranteed it from unsuspected adulteration. He painted the old Paris of the *bourgeoisie* and the students just as it was. If there was anything in the pictures to scandalise one, so much the worse for Paris, and *honi soit qui mal y voit*. The young and sprightly wives of elderly husbands immersed in their commerce, the susceptible daughters of officers and *rentiers* in retreat, were not so particular in their conduct as they might be. The students and gay young men about town were decidedly loose in their walk and conversation; and the *grisettes* keeping house in their garrets, away from the maternal eye, behaved according to their tastes and kind. Paul never stopped to pick his own phrases, and he frankly called a spade a spade. In short, he took his society as he saw it under his eye; dwelt for choice on the lighter and sunnier side, and laughed and joked through the life he enjoyed so heartily. In all his works you see the signs of his jovial temper and admirable digestion. He tells a capital story himself of his breakfasting on one occasion with Dumas the younger; when the rising author of the 'Dame aux Camellias' gave himself the condescending airs of the fashionable *petit maître*. Dumas was pretending then to live on air, and trifled delicately with one or two of the lighter dishes. De Kock, on the contrary, who saw through his man, devoured everything, even surpassing the performances of the paternal Dumas; and finally scandalised his young acquaintance by calling for a second portion of plum-pudding *au rhum*. And all his

favourite heroes have the same powerful digestion and the same capacity for hearty enjoyment. There is a superabundance of vitality and vivacity in his writings. When he takes his *grisettes* and their lovers out for a holiday, he enters into their pleasures heart and soul. Yet Paul de Kock, though somewhat coarse in the fibre, with literary tastes that were far from refined, was evidently capable of higher things ; and the most boisterous of his books are often redeemed from triviality by interludes of real beauty and pathos. He was the countryman turned Parisian, and he held to the one existence and the other. He frequented the Boulevards, but he lived at Romainville. As the Cockney artist, transferring the natural beauties of the environs of a great city to his pages, peopling the suburban woods with troops of merry-makers in the manner of a *bourgeois* Watteau, he has never been excelled. Yet now and again he will give us a powerful "bit" of slumbering beauties in the actual country, with the freshness and fidelity of a George Sand. Nothing can be more delicate than the touches in which he depicts the repentance and expiation of some woman who has "stooped to folly;" and there are stories in which he describes a promising career ruined by thoughtless extravagance and dissipation, which are the more valuable as practical sermons that they may have been read by those who might possibly profit by them.

It is seldom that a novelist who has made a great name decides to retire upon his reputation in the full vigour of his powers ; and it is seldom that a journalist who has come to the front in fiction falls back again upon journalism while still in the full flush of success. Yet that has been the case with

Edmund About, and very surprising it seems. It is true that he has the special talents of the journalist—a lucid and incisive style—a keen vein of satire—a logical method of marshalling and condensing arguments, and the faculty in apparent conviction of making the worse seem the better reason. As a political pamphleteer he stood unrivalled among his contemporaries ; and the opening sentence of his 'Question Romaine' might in itself have floated whole chapters of dullness. Had he hoped to make journalism the stepping-stone to high political place or influence, we could have understood him better. But he is lacking in the qualities that make a successful politician, and we fancy he knows that as well as anybody. The very versatility that might have multiplied his delightful novels, portended his failure as a public man. While personally it must surely yield more lively pleasure to let the fancy range through the fields of imagination, or to curb it with the consciousness of power in obedience to critical instincts. We can conceive no more satisfying earthly enjoyment to a man of *esprit* than exercising an originality so inexhaustible as that of About, with the sense of a very extraordinary facility in arresting fugitive impressions for the delight of your readers. His fancy appears to be never at fault in evoking combinations as novel as effective ; and he had the art of mingling the grave with the gay with a pointed sarcasm that was irresistibly piquant. 'Tolla' was a social satire on the habits of the long-descended Roman nobility, as the 'Question Romaine' was a satire on the administration of the popes. But the satire was softened by an engaging picture of the simple heroine, and by admirable sketches of the domestic life

in the gloomy interior of one of the poverty-stricken Roman palaces. It was relieved by brilliant photographs of the Campagna and Sabine hills, with shepherds in their sheepskins, shaggy buffaloes, savage hounds, ruined aqueducts, huts of reeds, vineyards, oliveyards, gardens of wild-flowers, fountains overgrown with mosses and maidenhair, and all the rest of it. 'Le Roi des Montagnes' presented in a livelier form the solid information of 'La Grèce Contemporaine': you smell the beds of the wild thyme on the slopes of Hymettus; you hear the hum of the bees as they swarm round the hives of the worthy peasant-priest who takes his tithes where he finds them, even when they are paid by the brigands in his flocks. The satire of the story may be overcharged; yet if it be caricature, the caricature is by no means extravagant, when we remember that the leaders of Oppositions in the Greek Assembly have been implicated in intrigues with the assassins of the highroads. About is always treading on the extreme of the original, yet he has seldom gone beyond the bounds of the admissible; and his most pathetic or tragic plots are lightened by something that is laughable. As in his 'Germaine' where the murderer engaged by Germaine's rival goes to work and fails, because the consumptive beauty, under medical advice, has been accustoming herself to the deadly poison he administers. The same idea appears in 'Monte Christo,' where Noirtier prepares his granddaughter Valentine against the machinations of her stepmother, the modern Brinvilliers. But in the scene by Dumas, everything is sombre; whereas About so ludicrously depicts the disappointment and surprise of the poisoner, that we smile even in the midst of our excitement and anxiety.

While his humour, with its fine irony and mockery, has one of the choicest qualities of wit by astonishing us with the most unexpected turns; landing the characters easily in the most unlikely situations, in defiance of their principles, prejudices, and convictions. As in 'Trente et Quarante' where the swearing and grumbling veteran who detests play as he detests a *pékin*, finds himself the centre of an excited circle of gamblers behind an accumulating pile of gold and bank-notes, and in the vein of luck that is breaking the tables.

About writes like a man of the world, and though he is by no means strait-laced in his treatment of the passions, his tone is thoroughly sound and manly;—in striking contrast to the sickly and unwholesome sentimentality of Ernest Feydeau, whose 'Fanny' made so great a sensation on its appearance. "A study," the author was pleased to call it, and a profitable study it was. With an ingenuity of special pleading that might have been employed to better purpose, he invoked our sympathies for the unfortunate lover who saw the lady's husband preferred to himself. Apparently unconsciously on the part of the author, the hero represents himself as contemptible a being as can well be conceived. Morality apart, the rawest of English novel-writers must have felt so maudlin and effeminate a character would never go down with his readers; and had the admirer of 'Fanny' been put upon the stage at any one of our theatres in White-chapel or the New Cut, he would have been hooted off by the roughs of the gallery. It is by no means to the credit of the French that, in spite of the unflattering portraiture of one of the national types, the book obtained so striking a success. But there is no denying the prosti-

tuted art by which the author instinctively addresses himself to the worst predilections of his countrymen; nor the audacity which hazarded one scene in particular, pronounced by his admirers to be the most effective of all, which, to our insular minds, is simply disgusting.

Flaubert's great masterpiece excited even more sensation than Feydeau's; and it deserved to do so. Flaubert is likewise one of the apostles of the impure, but he is at the same time among the first of social realists. He addresses himself almost avowedly to the senses and not to the feelings. He treats of love in its physiological aspects, and indulges in the minutest analysis of the grosser corporeal sensations. In intelligence and accomplishments, as well as literary skill, he was no ordinary man. He had read much and even studied profoundly; he had travelled far, keeping his eyes open, and had made some reputation in certain branches of science. He wrote his 'Madame Bovary' deliberately in his maturity; and the notoriety which carried him with it into the law-courts, made him a martyr in a society that was by no means fastidious. In gratitude for forensic services rendered, he dedicated a new edition of it to M. Marie-Antoine Sénard, who had once been president of the National Assembly, and who died *bâtonnier* of the Parisian bar. The venerable advocate and politician seems to have accepted the compliment as it was intended. And seldom before, perhaps, has an author concentrated such care and thought on a single work. Each separate character is wrought out with an exactness of elaboration to which the painting of the Dutch school is sketchy and superficial. Those who fill the humblest parts, or who are merely introduced to be dismissed, are

made as much living realities to us as Madame Bovary herself or her husband Charles. Flaubert goes beyond Balzac in the accumulation of details, which often become tedious, as they appear irrelevant. Yet it is clear in the retrospect that the effects have been foreseen, and we acknowledge some compensation in the end in the vivid impressions the author has made on us. His descriptions of inanimate objects are equally minute, from the ornaments and furniture in the rooms to the stones in the village house fronts, and the very bushes in the garden. He looks at nature like a land-surveyor, as he inspects men and women like a surgeon, without a touch of imagination, not to speak of poetry. In fact, he proposes to set the truth before everything, and we presume he does so to the best of his conviction. Yet what is the result of his varied experience and very close observation? We have always believed that in the world at large there is some preponderance of people who, on the whole, seem agreeable, and that the worst of our fellow-creatures have their redeeming qualities. According to M. Flaubert, not a bit of it. He treats mankind harshly, as Swift did, without the excuses of a savage temper fretted by baffled ambitions. M. Flaubert goes to his work as cruelly and imperturbably as the Scotch surgeon in the pirate ship, who is said to have claimed a negro as his share of the prey, that he might practise on the wretch in a series of operations. He makes everybody either repulsive or ridiculous. We say nothing of his heroine, who is a mere creature of the senses, loving neither husband, nor lovers, nor child; although such monstrosities as Emma must be rare, and we may doubt if they have ever existed. An ordinary writer, or we may add, a genuine

artist, would have at least sought to contrast Madame Bovary with softer and more kindly specimens of her species. Nor had M. Flaubert to seek far to do that. Madame Bovary's husband was ready to his hand. Charles is dull, and his habits are ridiculous; but he had sterling qualities, and an attachment for his wife, which might have made him an object of sympathy or even of affection. M. Flaubert characteristically takes care that he shall be neither; he consistently pursues the same system throughout; so we say advisedly that that realistic work of his is actually gross caricature and misrepresentation. A man who undertakes to reproduce human nature in a comprehensive panorama, might as well choose the whole of his subjects in Madame Tussaud's Chamber of Horrors. And if we must give Flaubert credit for extreme care in his work, we have equal cause to congratulate him on the rare harmony of his execution. For he invariably expatiates by choice on what is either absurd or revolting, whether it is the untempting M. Bovary awaking of a morning with his ruffled hair falling over his sodden features from under his cotton nightcap; or Madame ending her life in the agonies of poisoning, with blackened tongue and distorted limbs, and other details into which we prefer not to follow him.

Adolphe Belot's '*Femme de Feu*' is a romance of sensual passion like '*Madame Bovary*,' though it has little of Gustave Flaubert's consummate precision of detail. On the other hand, there is far more fire and *entrain*, and if the scenery shows less of the photograph, it is infinitely more picturesque. Sprightly cleverness is the characteristic of the book—though there, too, we have a poisoning and horrors

enough. The very title is a neat *double entendre*. The *femme de feu* takes her *petit nom* from a scene where she is seen bathing by starlight in a thunderstorm, when the crests of the surge are illumined by the electricity, and the billows are sparkling as they break around her. The light-hearted married gentleman who christened her so poetically, protests against intending any impeachment on her morals. As it turns out, he might have called her so for any other reason, without libelling her in the slightest degree. The whole book is consistently immoral; and debasing, besides, in its tone and tendency. It is commonplace so far, that this *femme de feu* captivates our old acquaintance, the grave and severe member of the French magistracy who goes swathed in parchments, and ostentatiously holds aloof from all sympathy with the frailties of his fellow-mortals. We must grant, we suppose, that Lucien d'Aubier ceases to be responsible for his actions when, falling under the spells of the *femme de feu*, he is swept off his legs in a tornado of emotions. But though a gentleman may be hurried by passion into crime, he must always as to certain social conventionalities be controlled in some degree by his honourable instincts. It is difficult for an Englishman to conceive the *égarement* which would tempt a high-bred man of good company to make deliberate preparations for imitating Peeping Tom of Coventry; and if the author forced him into so false a position, it would be done at all events with a protest and an explanation. It is highly characteristic of M. Belot and his school, that he thinks neither protest nor explanation necessary. The magistrate bores a *trou-Judas* in the partition of a bathing cabinet; and walks out holding himself as erect as

before. And his stooping to that is merely a preparation for still more disgraceful compromises with his conscience in the course of his married existence with the *femme de feu*. Had the scene been acted at a watering-place on this side of the Channel, we should have pronounced the story as incredible as it is immoral. Being laid in the latitudes of the bathing establishments on the Breton coast, we can only say that it is thoroughly French; and that M. Belot and his countrymen seem entirely to understand each other.

It is refreshing to turn from Flaubert and Belot to such a writer as Jules Sandeau. 'Madeline' is as innocently charming as Madame Bovary is the reverse. It is the difference between the atmosphere of the dissecting-room and of primrose banks in the spring; and the French Academy, by the way, did itself honour by crowning the modest graces of Sandeau's book. M. Sandeau shows no lack of knowledge of the world; but he passes lightly by the shadows on its shady side, resting by preference on simplicity and virtue. Young Maurice de Valtravers, to use a vulgar but expressive phrase, is hurrying post-haste to the devil. Wearied of the dulness of the paternal chateau, he has longed to wing a wider flight. He soon succeeds in singeing his pinions, and has come crippled to the ground. There seems no hope for him: he is the victim of remorse, with neither courage nor energy left to redeem the past in the future; and he has found at last a miserable consolation in the deliberate resolution to commit suicide. When his cousin Madeline, who has loved him in girlhood, comes to his salvation as a sister and an angel of mercy, with the rare sensibility of a loving woman, she understands the appeals that are most likely to

serve her. She comes as a suppliant, and prevails on him at least to put off self-destruction till her future is assured. It proves in the end that, by a pious fraud, she has presented herself as a beggar when she was really rich. That she resigns herself to a life of privation, supporting herself by the labour of her hands, is the least part of her sacrifice. She has stooped to appear selfish, in the excess of her generosity. Maurice swears, grumbles, and victimises himself. But the weeds that have been flourishing in the vitiated soil, die down one by one in that heavenly atmosphere. Madeline's sacrifices have their reward in this world as in the other: and she wins the hand of the cousin, whom she has loved in her innermost heart, as the prize of her prayers and her matchless devotion. Once only, as it appears to us, M. Sandeau shows the cloven foot unconsciously and inconsistently. Maurice, in his evil self-communings, reproaches himself with living as a brother and a saint in the society of so young and charming a woman. And to do him justice, he needs a supreme effort of courage when he decides to approach his cousin with dishonourable proposals. Madeline receives him in such a manner, that, without her uttering a word of reproach, the offender never offends again. But our nature is not so forgiving as hers: and we think the unpleasant scene is a blemish on a work that otherwise comes very near to perfection. For it is not on the story alone that 'Madeline' repays perusal; and every here and there we come upon a passage that is as pregnant with practical philosophy as anything in Montaigne or La Rochefoucauld.

Charles de Bernard laid himself out like Flaubert to seek his subjects and characters in exceptional

types. But, unlike Flaubert, in place of painting *en noir*, Bernard loved to look on the comic side of everything; and he laughs so joyously over the eccentricities of his kind, that it is difficult not to chime into the chorus; while Prosper Mérimée, with as prolific a fancy as any one, indulged the singularity he seemed so proud of, by curbing its *élans* ostentatiously. He studied austere and extreme simplicity; his style was as pure as it was cold and self-restrained; and his mirth has always a suspicion of the sneer in it. He never displayed such serene self-complacency as when he had played a successful practical joke in one of his inimitable mystifications. Like Mérimée, with whom otherwise he has hardly a point in common, Jules Claretie, as we have said, has merely taken to novel-writing among many kindred pursuits. He interests himself in politics, and writes daily leaders indefatigably; he is a critic of all tastes, who visits in turn the theatres, the art-galleries, and the parlours of the publishers. Consequently, he places himself at a disadvantage with those of his competitors who concentrate their minds on the fiction of the moment, and live sleeping and waking with the creations of their brain, till these become most vivid personalities to them. Claretie's works are extremely clever,—in parts and in particular scenes they are even powerful; but the incidents are wanting in continuity as the characters are vague in their outlines. They give one the idea, and it is probably not an unjust one, of a man who makes a dash at his brushes when he finds some unoccupied hours; who plunges ahead in a flow of ready improvisation, till the fancy flags for the time, or he is brought up by some more urgent engagement. When he returns to

the work on the next occasion, naturally he has to re-knot the threads of his ideas. What goes far towards confirming our theory, is the exceptional freedom from such faults in 'Le Renégat,' which, we believe, was his last work but one. In 'The Renegade,' Claretie placed himself on a *terrain* where he knew every yard of the ground—that is to say, he was in the very centre of those hot polemics which preceded the decline and fall of the Empire. We do not say that Michel Berthier was intended for a portrait or for a libel. But such a type of the time-server, who was tempted to his fall by the talents on which he had hoped to trade, was by no means uncommon; and the siren who seduced him, the veteran courtier who tickled him, the purse-proud *nouveaux-riches*, and the Republicans made fanatical by prosecutions and condemnations, were all figures with whom the author had familiarised himself, by hearsay if not by actual intercourse. His very scenes may have been repeatedly acted, with no great differences, under his eyes; although his talent must have remoulded and recast them in novel and more piquant shapes. We say nothing of Michel Berthier's leaving-taking of his mistress Lia, and of the tragic episode when the miserable young woman drags herself back to die of the poison under the roof of the man she had adored. That scene, although not unaffecting, savours too strongly of the melodramatic; and at best it is *banal*, to borrow a French phrase. But there is great power in the situation where the saintly Pauline, who will retire into a convent to the despair of her father, silences the pleadings of the broken-hearted man by quoting those seductive pictures of the cloister-life which had been written by his own too eloquent pen. Yet, though the

situation is striking, it has its weak point; and it is impossible to imagine so careful a writer as Flaubert or Daudet, permitting a girl, perfect as Pauline, to be guilty of so cold-blooded a piece of cruelty as the abandonment of a parent by his only child to mourn her memory while she is still alive to him.

It is nearly six years since the death of Emile Gaboriau, and no one has succeeded as yet in imitating him even tolerably, though he had struck into a line that was as profitable as it was popular. We are not inclined to overrate Gaboriau's genius, for genius he had of a certain sort. We have said in another article that his system was less difficult than it seems, since he must have worked his puzzles out *en revers*,—putting them together with an eye to pulling them to pieces. But his originality in his own *genre* is unquestionable, though in the main conception of his romances he took Edgar Poe for his model. But Gaboriau embellished and improved on the workmanship of the morbid American. The murders of the Rue Morgue and the other stories of the sort are hard and dry *procès-verbals*, where the crime is everything, and the people go for little, except in so far as their antecedents enlighten the detection. With Gaboriau, on the other hand, we have individuality in each character, and animation as well as coarser excitement in the story. The dialogue is lively, and always illustrative. Perhaps Gaboriau has had but indifferent justice done to him, because he betook himself to a style of romance which was supposed to be the speciality of police-reporters and penny-a-liners. His readers were inclined to take it for granted that his criminals were mere stage villains, and that his police-agents, apart from their infallible *flair*, were such puppets

as one sets in motion in a melodrama. The fact being that they are nothing of the kind. Extreme pains have been bestowed on the more subtle traits of the personages by which, while being tracked, examined or tried, they are compromised, condemned or acquitted. Read Gaboriau carefully as you will, it is rarely indeed that you find a flaw in the meshes of the intricate nets he has been weaving. Or, to change the metaphor, the springs of the complicated action, packed away as they are, the one within the other, are always working in marvellous harmony towards the appointed end. The ingenuity of some of his combinations and suggestions is extraordinary; and we believe his works might be very profitable reading to public prosecutors as well as intelligent detectives. His Maître Lecoq and his Père Tabouret have ideas which would certainly not necessarily occur to the most *rusé* practitioner of the Rue Jerusalem; and they do not prove their astuteness by a single happy thought. On the contrary, the stuff of their nature is that of the heaven-born detective, who is an observer from temperament rather than from habit, and who draws his mathematical deductions from a comparison of the most trivial signs. The proof that Gaboriau's books are something more than the vulgar *feuilleton* of the 'Police News,' is that most of them will bear reading again, though the sensations of the *dénouement* have been anticipated. In reading for the second time, we read with a different but a higher interest. Thus in the 'L'affaire Lerouge,' for example, there is an admirable mystification. The respectable and admirably conducted Noel Gerdy, who has coolly committed a brutal murder, plays the hypocrite systematically to such perfection that we can understand

the famous amateur detective being his familiar intimate without entertaining a suspicion as to his nature and habits. The disclosure having been made, and Noel fatally compromised, the circumstances strike you as carrying improbability on the face of them; so you read again and are severely critical in the expectation of catching M. Gaboriau tripping. And we believe, by the way, that in that very novel we have come upon the only oversight with which we can reproach him, although it is not in the history of Noel's intimacy with Père Tabouret. It is a missing fragment of a foil, which is one of the most deadly *pièces de conviction* against the innocent Viscount de Commarin; and the fragment, so far as we can remember, is never either traced or accounted for. But exceptions of this kind only prove the rule; and when we think how the author has varied and multiplied the startling details in his criminal plots, we must admit that his fertility of invention is marvellous. The story of the 'Petit Vieux des Batignolles,' the last work he wrote, though short and slight, was by no means the least clever. One unfortunate habit he had, which may perhaps be attributed to considerations of money. He almost invariably lengthened and weakened his novels by some long-winded digression, which was at least as much episodic as explanatory. When the interest was being driven along at high-pressure pace, he would blow off the steam all of a sudden, and shunt his criminals and detectives on to a siding, while, going back among his personages for perhaps a generation, he tells us how all the circumstances had come about.

No less remarkable in his way is Jules Verne; and the way of Verne is wonderful indeed. He has recast the modern novel in the

shape of 'The Fairy Tales' of science, and combined scientific edification with the maddest eccentricity of excitement. His, it must be allowed, is a very peculiar talent. It is difficult to picture a man of most quick and lively imagination resigning himself to elaborate scientific and astronomical calculations; cramming up his facts and figures from a library of abstruse literature, and pausing in the bursts of a flowing pen to consult the columns of statistics under his elbow. Thus these books of Verne are the strangest mixture, upsetting all the preconceived notions of the novel-reader, and diverting him in spite of himself from his confirmed habits. We read novels, as a rule, to be amused, and nothing else. But Verne not only undertakes to amuse us, but to carry us up an ascending scale of astounding sensations. It is on condition, however, that we consent to let ourselves be educated on subjects we have neglected with the indifference of ignorance. If we skip the scientific dissertations when we come to them, we break the continuity that gives interest to the story, and the ground goes gliding from beneath our feet as much as if the author had launched us on one of his flights among the stars. Now we are exploring the regions of space at a rate somewhere between that of sound and electricity; now we are diving into the caverns of ocean, among submarine forests and sea-monsters. And, again, we are at a standstill in mazes of figures, or picking our steps among primeval geological formations; and yet, though we have been, as it were, brought back to the lecture-room or the laboratory, we are still in a world of surprises and emotions, though the surprises are of a very different kind. Verne, of course, with all his skill, must abandon

the novelist's chief means of influence. His books are so far the reverse of real as to be the very quintessence of impossible extravagance. We may bring ourselves to believe, for a moment, in the marvels of an Aladdin's cave ; for we can hardly recognise a physical objection to precious stones being magnified to an indefinite size. Even the credibility of a loadstone island, that draws the bolts out of the ship's timbers, may seem a mere question of force and mass. But the judgment, even under a trance, refuses to expand to the possibility of a piece of ordnance, of nine hundred French feet in length, that is to shoot to the moon a projectile supposed to deliver a party of travellers. As a consequence, the writer sacrifices the interest of character, and the analysis of conceivable passions and emotions. A Barbicane—an Ardan—the explosive J. T. Maston—are in a category of creations far more fanciful than a Sindbad the Sailor, or a Captain Lemuel Gulliver. They are of the nature of the giants and ogres in the pantomime, who figure on the stage with the columbine in petticoats ; and these are very evidently of a different order of beings from the girl who performs for a weekly salary. Verne was wise in his generation, in striking out a line which has assured him both notoriety and a handsome fortune. It says much for his original talent that he has had a remarkable success ; and though we fancy he might have made a more lasting name in fiction, of a higher order and more enduring, yet, probably, he has never regretted his choice. Perhaps the most popular of all his stories is the 'Tour of the World,' which was rational by comparison to most of the others. We happened to read it lately in a twenty-fourth edition ; and we are afraid to

say for how many successive nights the piece had its run at the Porte St Martin. But the idea of making the round of the globe in eighty days was conceivably feasible, if it was rash to bet on it. The incidents that delayed the adventurous traveller might have happened—allowances made—to any man ; and each of the separate combinations by which he surmounted them, goes hardly beyond the bounds of belief. The real weakness of the story is in what seems at first one of its chief attractions. The self-contained Mr Phileas Fogg is actually more improbable than Ardan or Barbicane. The man who could keep his temper unruffled, his sleep unbroken, and his digestion unimpaired, under the most agitating disappointments and a perpetual strain, has nothing of human nature as we know it, and must have boasted a brain and nerves that were independent of physical laws. And yet, even in this inhuman conception, Verne shows what he might have been capable of had he consented to work under more commonplace conditions. For by his disinterested and generous Quixotry in action, Mr Fogg gradually gains upon us, till we think that Mrs Aouda was to be sincerely congratulated in being united to that impersonation of the *phlegme Britannique*.

Among the novelists who have set themselves emulously to work to scathe and satirise the society of the Empire, Daudet and Zola take the foremost places. Of the former, we have nothing to say here, except incidentally in referring to Zola, since we lately noticed his novels at length. But there is this obvious difference between the men, that Daudet has the more refined perceptions of his art. He does not *afficher* like Zola, a *mandat impératif* from his conscience to go about with the

hook and the basket of the *chiffonier*; to turn over the refuse of the slums without any respect for our senses; and to rake as a labour of love in the sediment of the Parisian sewerage. Daudet's social pictures are often cynical enough; but he knows when to *gazer*; and he shows self-restraint in passing certain subjects over in silence. While Zola, recognising a mission that has assuredly never been inspired from above, makes himself the surveyor and reforming apostle of all that is most unclean. We have spoken of M. Zola's conscience, because he makes his conscience his standing apology. When the critics maliciously cast their mud at the spotless purity of his intentions, he throws up his hands in meek protest. The prophets have been stoned in all the ages, and virtue and duty will always have their martyrs. His critics will insist on confounding him with the shameless *roué* whose depravity takes delight in the scenes he describes. How little they know the honest citizen, who is as regular in his habits as in his hours of labour! To our mind, by no avowal could he have condemned himself more surely than by that apology. We are half inclined to forgive a book like 'Faublas,' or 'Mademoiselle de Maupin,' flung off with the fire of an ardent temperament, full of the spirits of hot-blooded youth, and with some delicacy of tone in the worst of its indecencies. We have neither sympathy nor toleration for the cold-blooded philosopher who shuts himself up in the quiet privacy of his chamber to invent the monstrosities he subsequently dilates upon. He harps upon the conscience which we do not believe in. According to the most far-fetched view of that mission of his, he might be well content to paint what he has seen. Heaven knows he would find no lack of congenial subjects in the

quarters where he has pushed his favourite researches. But such a scene as he has selected for the climax of the 'Curée' is neither permissible by art nor admissible in decency. What we may say for it is, that it adds an appropriately finishing touch to the singularly revolting romance of the foulest corruption, that he has worked out so industriously and with such tender care. But his genius — for he has genius — is essentially grovelling. The Caliban of contemporary fiction never puts out his power so earnestly as when he is inhaling some atmosphere that would be blighting to refinement. His 'Assommoir,' from the first page to the last, is repulsive and shocking beyond description; and yet there is a sustained force in the book that makes it difficult to fling it away. But even the elasticity of Zola's principles and conscience can hardly cover the pruriency of the dramatic incident in the public washing-place.

It must be admitted that Zola has in large measure two of the most indispensable qualities of the successful novelist. He has supreme self-confidence and indefatigable industry. We have understood, as we have said before, that he devotes the mornings to his novels, and can count invariably upon "coming to time!" That we can easily understand. He gives us the idea of a thoroughly mechanical mind; and though his scenes may be profoundly or disgustingly sensational, his style is sober, not to say tame. He lays himself out to make his impressions by reproducing, in sharp clear touches, the pictures that have taken perfect shape in his brain. We cannot imagine his changing his preconceived plan in obedience to a happy impulse; and he seldom or never indulges in those brilliant flights that are suggested to the fancy in moments of inspira-

tion. Indeed, if he were to take to lengthening his route—if he wasted time by wandering aside into foot-paths, he would never arrive at his journey's end. For he has far to go if he is to reach his destination before time and powers begin to fail. He shows his self-confidence in the complacent assurance that the public will see him through his stupendous task, and continue to buy the promised volumes of the interminable memoirs of the Rougon-Macquart family. Writers like Mr Anthony Trollope have kept us in the company of former acquaintances through several successive novels. There is a good deal to be said for the idea, and Mr Trollope has been justified by its success. You have been gradually familiarised with the creations you meet with again and again; and writers and readers are relieved from the necessity of following the progress of each study of life from the incipient conception to the finish. But M. Zola has improved, or at least advanced on that idea. It is not the same people he presents to you again and again, but their children, grandchildren, and descendants to the third and fourth generation; so much so, that to his 'Page d'Amour' he has prefixed the pedigree of the Rougon-Macquarts: and it was high time that he did something of the kind if we were not to get muddled in his family complications. Apropos to that, he announces that twelve volumes are to appear in addition to the eight that have already been published. Twenty volumes consecrated to those Rougon-Macquarts! Should literary industry go on multiplying at this rate, we may have some future English author "borrowing from the French," and giving himself *carte blanche* for inexhaustible occupation in a prospectus of 'The Fortunes of the Family of the Smiths.' The Smiths would serve for the

exhaustive illustration of our English life, as those Rougon-Macquarts for the ephemeral society of the Empire.

In one respect M. Zola's political portraiture seems to us to be fairer than that of Daudet. Daudet in his 'Nabab' invidiously misrepresents. There is no possibility of mistaking the intended identity of some of his leading personages, even by those who have been merely in front of the scenes. Yet he introduces scandalous or criminal incidents in their lives which we have every reason to believe are purely apocryphal. De Morny never died under the circumstances described; and the relations and friends of a famous English doctor have still more reason for protesting against a shameful libel. Zola makes no masked approaches; nor do we suppose that he panders to personal enmities. But he attacks the representatives of the system he detests with a frankness that is brutal in the French sense of the word. Son Excellence, Eugene Rougon, is to be painted *en noir* by a public prosecutor. M. Zola's readers understand from the commencement that he is to be presented in the most unfavourable light. He is one of the creatures of the order of the autocratic revolution, which takes its instruments where it finds them, and only sees to their being serviceable. Failure is the one fault that cannot be forgiven, as all means of succeeding seem fair to the *parvenu*. The peasant-born adventurer who climbs the political ladder is the complement of the autocrat who lends him a helping hand. His Excellency has neither delicacy, scruples, nor honour. But his conscience, like M. Zola's, is as robust as his *physique*; and he carries the craft of his country breeding into politics, being as much as ever *notre paysan*, as Sardou has put

the peasant on the stage. When he shows kindly feeling, or does a liberal act, it is sure to have been prompted by personal vanity; he is sensitive to the reputation he has made in his province; he loves to play the rôle of the *parvenu* patron; and his passions are stirred into seething ferocity when it is a question of being balked or baffled by a rival. Then there comes in the by-play. As a private individual, as a notary, or a farmer in the country, Rougon might have been one of the heroes of Flaubert or Belot. His nature is brutally sensual; his capacity for enjoyment is as robust as his constitution; there is nothing he would more enjoy than playing the Don Juan, were not his passions held in check by his interest and ambition. So there is nothing that does him any great injustice in the incident where he shows Clorinde his favourite horse. We do not suppose that it is in any degree founded upon fact; indeed, from internal evidence it must be imaginary; and yet, if his Excellency were half as black as he is painted elsewhere, that touch of embellishment goes absolutely for nothing. But if we ask how far such painting is legitimate, we are brought back again to the point we started from.

The 'Assommoir,' though it is a section of the same comprehensive work, is a book of an altogether different *genre*. Reviewing it in the ordinary way is altogether out of the question; and there is much in it which eludes even criticism by allusion. This at least one may say of it, that it is a remarkable book of its kind. The author seems not only to have caught the secret phraseology of the slang of the lowest order of Parisians, but he has lowered himself to their corruption of thought, to say nothing of their depraved perversity of conduct. The colouring of the story is perfect in

its harmony. Never in any case does the novelist rise above the vulgar, even when the better feelings of some fallen nature are stirred; and it is impossible to imagine the depths to which he sinks when he is groping, as we have said, in the darkness of the sewers. He interests us in Gervaise, that he may steadily disenchant us. In place of trying to idealise by way of contrast and relief the lingering traces of the freshness she brought to Paris from the country, he demonstrates her descent step by step, with all those contaminations to which she is exposed. We doubt not that the talk of public washerwomen may often be gross enough; but how can we attribute any of the finer feelings to a woman who listens to it indifferently, if she does not join it? Gervaise goes from bad to worse as she loses hope and heart; and idle habits grow upon her. Finally, she resigns herself to the last resource of a reckless woman in desperate extremity; and Zola has not the discretion to drop a veil over the last horrible incidents of her miserable career. Faithful to his system in completing the picture, he does not spare us a single revolting detail. No doubt you cannot complain of being surprised, for he has been industriously working on to his terrible climax. He has missed no opportunity of exciting disgust, he has neglected no occasion of turning everything to grossness; and you cannot say you have not had ample warning if the end seems somewhat strong to you after all. We do not know what surprises M. Zola may have in store for us; we cannot pretend to gauge the range of his audacious invention; but we do know that he is one of the most popular and successful of French novelists, and it is not want of sympathetic encouragement that will cripple him.

JOHN CALDIGATE.—CONCLUSION.

CHAPTER LX.—HOW MRS BOLTON WAS NEARLY CONQUERED.

ONE morning about the middle of October, Robert Bolton walked out from Cambridge to Puritan Grange with a letter in his pocket,—a very long and a very serious letter. The day was that on which the Secretary of State was closeted with the barrister, and on the evening of which he at length determined that Caldigate should be allowed to go free. There had, therefore, been no pardon granted,—as yet. But in the letter the writer stated that such pardon would, almost certainly, be awarded.

It was from William Bolton, in London, to his brother the attorney, and was written with the view of proving to all the Boltons at Cambridge, that it was their duty to acknowledge Hester as the undoubted wife of John Caldigate; and recommended also that, for Hester's sake, they should receive him as her husband. The letter had been written with very great care, and had been powerful enough to persuade Robert Bolton of the truth of the first proposition.

It was very long, and as it repeated all the details of the evidence for and against the verdict, it shall not be repeated here at its full length. Its intention was to show that, looking at probabilities, and judging from all that was known, there was much more reason to suppose that there had been no marriage at Ahalala than that there had been one. The writer acknowledged that, while the verdict stood confirmed against the man, Hester's family were bound to regard it, and to act as though they did not doubt its justice;—but that when that verdict should be set aside,—as far as

any criminal verdict can be set aside,—by the Queen's pardon, then the family would be bound to suppose that they who advised her Majesty had exercised a sound discretion.

"I am sure you will all agree with me," he said, "that no personal feeling in regard to Caldigate should influence your judgment. For myself, I like the man. But that, I think, has had nothing to do with my opinion. If it had been the case that, having a wife living, he had betrayed my sister into all the misery of a false marriage, and had made her the mother of a nameless child, I should have felt myself bound to punish him to every extent within my power. I do not think it unchristian to say that in such a case I could not have forgiven him. But presuming it to be otherwise,—as we all shall be bound to do if he be pardoned,—then, for Hester's sake, we should receive the man with whom her lot in life is so closely connected. She, poor dear, has suffered enough, and should not be subjected to the further trouble of our estrangement.

"Nor, if we acknowledge the charge against him to be untrue, is there any reason for a quarrel. If he has not been bad to our sister in that matter, he has been altogether good to her. She has for him that devotion which is the best evidence that a marriage has been well chosen. Presuming him to be innocent, we must confess, as to her, that she has been simply loyal to her husband,—with such loyalty as every married man would desire. For this she should be rewarded rather than punished.

"I write to you thinking that in this way I may best reach my father and Mrs Bolton. I would go down and see them did I not know that your words would be more efficacious with them than my own. And I do it as a duty to my sister, which I feel myself bound to perform. Pray forgive me if I remind you that in this respect she has a peculiar right to a performance of your duty in the matter. You counselled and carried out the marriage,—not at all unfortunately if the man be, as I think, innocent. But you are bound, at any rate, to sift the evidence very closely, and not to mar her happiness by refusing to acknowledge him if there be reasonable ground for supposing the verdict to have been incorrect."

Sift the evidence, indeed! Robert Bolton had done that already very closely. Bagwax and the stamps had not moved him, nor the direct assurance of Dick Shand. But the incarceration by Government of Crinkett and Euphemia Smith had shaken him, and the fact that they had endeavoured to escape the moment they heard of Shand's arrival. But not the less had he hated Caldigate. The feeling which had been impressed on his mind when the first facts were made known to him remained. Caldigate had been engaged to marry the woman, and had lived with her, and had addressed her as his wife! The man had in a way got the better of him. And then the twenty thousand pounds! And then, again, Caldigate's manner to himself! He could not get over his personal aversion, and therefore unconsciously wished that his brother-in-law should be guilty,—wished, at any rate, that he should be kept in prison. Gradually had fallen upon him the conviction that Caldigate would be pardoned.

And then, of course, there had come much consideration as to his sister's condition. He, too, was a conscientious and an affectionate man. He was well aware of his duty to his sister. While he was able to assure himself that Caldigate was not her husband, he could satisfy himself by a conviction that it was his duty to keep them apart. Thus he could hate the man, advocate all severity against the man, and believe the while that he was doing his duty to his sister as an affectionate brother. But now there was a revulsion. It was three weeks since he and his brother had parted, not with the kindest feelings, up in London, and during that time the sifting of the evidence had been going on within his own breast from hour to hour. And now this letter had come,—a letter which he could not put away in anger, a letter which he could not ignore. To quarrel permanently with his brother William was quite out of the question. He knew the value of such a friend too well, and had been too often guided by his advice. So he sifted the evidence once again, and then walked off to Puritan Grange with the letter in his pocket.

In these latter days old Mr Bolton did not go often into Cambridge. Men said that his daughter's misfortune had broken him very much. It was perhaps the violence of his wife's religion rather than the weight of his daughter's sufferings which cowed him. Since Hester's awful obstinacy had become hopeless to Mrs Bolton, an atmosphere of sackcloth and ashes had made itself more than ever predominant at Puritan Grange. If any one hated papistry Mrs Bolton did so; but from a similar action of religious fanaticism she had fallen into worse than papistical self-persecution. That men and

women were all worms to be trodden under foot, and grass of the field to be thrown into the oven, was borne in so often on poor Mr Bolton that he had not strength left to go to the bank. And they were nearer akin to worms and more like grass of the field than ever, because Hester would stay at Folking instead of returning to her own home.

She was in this frame of mind when Robert Bolton was shown into the morning sitting-room. She was sitting with the Bible before her, but with some domestic needlework in her lap. He was doing nothing,—not even having a book ready to his hand. Thus he would sit the greater part of the day, listening to her when she would read to him, but much preferring to be left alone. His life had been active and prosperous, but the evening of his days was certainly not happy.

His son Robert had been anxious to discuss the matter with him first, but found himself unable to separate them without an amount of ceremony which would have filled her with suspicion. "I have received a letter this morning from William," he said, addressing himself to his father.

"William Bolton is, I fear, of the world worldly," said the stepmother. "His words always savour to me of the huge ungodly city in which he dwells."

But that this was not a time for such an exercise he would have endeavoured to expose the prejudice of the lady. As it was he was very gentle. "William is a man who understands his duty well," he said.

"Many do that, but few act up to their understanding," she rejoined.

"I think, sir, I had better read his letter to you. It has been written with that intention, and I am bound to let you know the con-

tents. Perhaps Mrs Bolton will let me go to the end so that we may discuss it afterwards."

But Mrs Bolton would not let him go to the end. He had not probably expected such forbearance. At every point as to the evidence she interrupted him, striving to show that the arguments used were of no real weight. She was altogether irrational, but still she argued her case well. She withered Bagwax and Dick with her scorn; she ridiculed the quarrels of the male and female witnesses; she reviled the Secretary of State, and declared it to be a shame that the Queen should have no better advisers. But when William Bolton spoke of Hester's happiness, and of the concessions which should be made to secure that, she burst out into eloquence. What did he know of her happiness? Was it not manifest that he was alluding to this world without a thought of the next? "Not a reflection as to her soul's welfare has once come across his mind," she said;—"not an idea as to the sin with which her soul would be laden were she to continue to live with the man when knowing that he was not her husband."

"She would know nothing of the kind," said the attorney.

"She ought to know it," said Mrs Bolton, again begging the whole question.

But he persevered as he had resolved to do when he left his house upon this difficult mission. "I am sure my father will acknowledge," he said, "that however strong our own feelings have been, we should bow to the conviction of others who——"

But he was promulgating a doctrine which her conscience required her to stop at once. "The convictions of others shall never have weight with me when the welfare of my eternal soul is at stake."

"I am speaking of those who have had better means of getting at the truth than have come within our reach. The Secretary of State can have no bias of his own in the matter."

"He is, I fear, a godless man, living and dealing with the godless. Did I not hear the other day that the great Ministers of State will not even give a moment to attend to the short meaningless prayers which are read in the House of Commons?"

"No one," continued Robert Bolton, trying to get away from sentiment into real argument,—“no one can have been more intent on separating them than William was when he thought that the evidence was against him. Now he thinks the evidence in his favour. I know no man whose head is clearer than my brother's. I am not very fond of John Caldigate.”

"Nor am I," said the woman, with an energy which betrayed much of her true feeling.

"But if it be the case that they are in truth man and wife——"

"In the sight of God they are not so," she said.

"Then," he continued, trying to put aside her interruption, and to go on [with the assertion he had commenced, "it must be our duty to acknowledge him for her sake. Were we not to do so, we should stand condemned in the opinion of all the world."

"Who cares for the opinion of the world?"

"And we should destroy her happiness."

"Her happiness here on earth! What does it matter? There is no such happiness."

It was a very hard fight, but perhaps not harder than he had expected. He had known that she would not listen to reason,—that she would not even attempt to understand it. And he had learned

before this how impregnable was that will of fanaticism in which she would intrench herself,—how improbable it was that she would capitulate under the force of any argument. But he thought it possible that he might move his father to assert himself. He was well aware that, in the midst of that apparent lethargy, his father's mind was at work with much of its old energy. He understood the physical infirmities and religious vacillation which, combined, had brought the old man into his present state of apparent submission. It was hardly two years since the same thing had been done in regard to Hester's marriage. Then Mr Bolton had asserted himself, and declared his will in opposition to his wife. There had indeed been much change in him since that time, but still something of the old fire remained. "I have thought it to be my duty, sir," he said, "to make known to you William's opinion and my own. I say nothing as to social intercourse. That must be left to yourself. But if this pardon be granted, you will, I think, be bound to acknowledge John Caldigate to be your son-in-law."

"Your father agrees with me, said Mrs Bolton, rising from her chair, and speaking in an angry tone.

"I hope you both will agree with me. As soon as tidings of the pardon reach you, you should, I think, intimate to Hester that you accept her marriage as having been true and legal. I shall do so, even though I should never see him in my house again."

"You of course will do as you please."

"And you, sir?" he said, appealing to the old man.

"You have no right to dictate to your father," said the wife angrily.

"He has always encouraged me

to offer him my advice." Then Mr Bolton shuffled in his chair, as though collecting himself for an effort,—and at last sat up, with his head, however, bent forward, and with both his arms resting on the arms of his chair. Though he looked to be old, much older than he was, still there was a gleam of fire in his eye. He was thin, almost emaciated, and his head hung forward as though there were not strength left in his spine for him to sit erect, "I hope, sir, you do not think that I have gone beyond my duty in what I have said."

"She shall come here," muttered the old man.

"Certainly, she shall," said Mrs Bolton, "if she will. Do you suppose that I do not long to have my own child in my arms?"

"She shall come here, and be called by her name," said the father.

"She shall be Hester,—my own Hester," said the mother, not feeling herself as yet called upon to contradict her husband.

"And John Caldigate shall come," he said.

"Never!" exclaimed Mrs Bolton.

"He shall be asked to come. I say he shall. Am I to be harder on my own child than are all the others? Shall I call her a cast-away, when others say that she is an honest married woman?"

"Who has called her a cast-away?"

"I took the verdict of the jury, though it broke my heart," he continued. "It broke my heart to be told that my girl and her child were nameless,—but I believed it because the jury said so, and because the judge declared it. When they tell me the contrary, why shall I not believe that? I do believe it;—and she shall come here, if she will, and he shall come." Then he got up and slowly moved out of the room,

so that there might be no further argument on the subject.

She had reseated herself with her arms crossed, and there sat perfectly mute. Robert Bolton stood up and repeated all his arguments, appealing even to her maternal love,—but she answered him never a word. She had not even yet succeeded in making the companion of her life submissive to her! That was the feeling which was now uppermost in her mind. He had said that Caldigate should be asked to the house, and should be acknowledged throughout all Cambridge as his son-in-law. And having said it, he would be as good as his word. She was sure of that. Of what avail had been all the labour of her life with such a result?

"I hope you will think that I have done no more than my duty," said Robert Bolton, offering her his hand. But there she sat perfectly silent, with her arms still folded, and would take no notice of him. "Good-bye," said he, striving to put something of the softness of affection into his voice. But she would not even bend her head to him;—and thus he left her.

She remained motionless for the best part of an hour. Then she got up, and according to her daily custom walked a certain number of times round the garden. Her mind was so full that she did not as usual observe every twig, almost every leaf, as she passed. Nor, now that she was alone, was that religious bias, which had so much to do with her daily life, very strong within her. There was no taint of hypocrisy in her character; but yet, with the force of human disappointment heavy upon her, her heart was now hot with human anger, and mutinous with human resolves. She had proposed to herself to revenge herself upon the men of her husband's family,—upon the men who

had contrived that marriage for her daughter,—by devoting herself to the care of that daughter and her nameless grandson, and by letting it be known to all that the misery of their condition would have been spared had her word prevailed. That they should live together a stern, dark, but still sympathetic life, secluded within the high walls of that lonely abode, and that she should thus be able to prove how right she had been, how wicked and calamitous their interference with

her child—that had been the scheme of her life. And now her scheme was knocked on the head, and Hester was to become a prosperous ordinary married woman amidst the fatness of the land at Folking! It was all wormwood to her. But still, as she walked, she acknowledged to herself, that as that old man had said so,—so it must be. With all her labour, with all her care, and with all her strength, she had not succeeded in becoming the master of that weak old man.

CHAPTER LXI.—THE NEWS REACHES CAMBRIDGE.

The tidings of John Caldigate's pardon reached Cambridge on the Saturday morning, and was communicated in various shapes. Official letters from the Home Office were written to the governor of the jail and to the sub-sheriff, to Mr Seely who was still acting as attorney on behalf of the prisoner, and to Caldigate himself. The latter was longer than the others, and contained a gracious expression of her Majesty's regret that he as an innocent person should have been subjected to imprisonment. The Secretary of State also was described as being keenly sensible of the injustice which had been perpetrated by the unfortunate and most unusual circumstances of the case. As the Home Office had decided that the man was to be considered innocent, it decided also on the expression of its opinion without a shadow of remaining doubt. And the news reached Cambridge in other ways by the same post. William Bolton wrote both to his father and brother, and Mr Brown the Under-Secretary sent a private letter to the old squire at Folking, of which further mention shall be made. Before church time on the Sunday morning, the fact that John

Caldigate was to be released, or had been released from prison, was known to all Cambridge.

Caldigate himself had borne his imprisonment on the whole well. He had complained but little to those around him, and had at once resolved to endure the slowly passing two years with silent fortitude,—as a brave man will resolve to bear any evil for which there is no remedy. But a more wretched man than he was after the first week of bitterness could hardly be found. Fortitude has no effect in abating such misery other than what may come from an absence of fretful impatience. The man who endures all that the tormentors can do to him without a sign, simply refuses to acknowledge the agonies inflicted. So it was with Caldigate. Though he obeyed with placid readiness all the prison instructions, and composed his features and seemed almost to smile when that which was to be exacted from him was explained, he ate his heart in dismay as he counted the days, the hours, the minutes, and then calculated the amount of misery that was in store for him. And there was so much more for him to think of than his own

condition. He knew, of course, that he was innocent of the crime imputed to him;—but would it not be the same to his wife and child as though he had been in truth guilty? Would not his boy to his dying day be regarded as illegitimate? And though he had been wrongly condemned, had not all this come in truth from his own fault? And when that eternity of misery within the prison walls should have come to an end,—if he could live through it so as to see the end of it,—what would then be his fate, and what his duty? He had perfect trust in his wife; but who could say what two years might do,—two years during which she would be subjected to the pressure of all her friends? Where should he find her when the months had passed? And if she were no longer at Folking, would she come back to him? He was sure, nearly sure, that he could not claim her as his wife. And were she still minded to share her future lot with him, in what way should he treat her? If that horrid woman was his wife in the eye of the law,—and he feared though hardly knew that it would be so,—then could not that other one, who was to him as a part of his own soul, be his wife also? What, too, would become of his child, who, as far as he could see, would not be his child at all in the eye of the law? Even while he was still a free man, still uncondemned, an effort had been made to rob him of his wife and boy,—an effort which for a time had seemed to be successful. How would Hester be able to withstand such attempts when they would be justified by a legal decision that she was not his wife,—and could not become his wife while that other woman was alive? Such thoughts as these did not tend to relieve the weariness of his days.

The only person from the outside world whom he was allowed to see during the three months of his incarceration was Mr Seely, and with him he had two interviews. From the time of the verdict Mr Seely was still engaged in making those inquiries as to the evidence of which we have heard so much, and though he was altogether unsympathetic and incredulous, still he did his duty. He had told his client that these inquiries were being made, and had, on his second visit, informed him of the arrival of Dick Shand. But he had never spoken with hope, and had almost ridiculed Bagwax with his postage-stamps and post-marks. When Caldigate first heard that Dick was in England,—for a minute or two,—he allowed himself to be full of hope. But the attorney had dashed his hopes. What was Shand's evidence against the testimony of four witnesses who had borne the fire of cross-examination? Their character was not very good, but Dick's was, if possible, worse. Mr Seely did not think that Dick's word would go for much. He could simply say that, as far as he knew, there had been no marriage. And in this Mr Seely had been right, for Dick's word had not gone for much. Then, when Crinkett and Mrs Smith had been arrested, no tidings had reached him of that further event. It had been thought best that nothing as to that should be communicated to him till the result should be known.

Thus it had come to pass that when the tidings reached the prison he was not in a state of expectation. The governor of the prison knew what was going on, and had for days been looking for the order of release. But he had not held himself to be justified in acquainting his prisoner with the facts. The despatches to him and to Caldigate from the Home Office

were marked immediate, and by the courtesy of the postmaster were given in at the prison gates before daylight. Caldigate was still asleep when the door of the cell was opened by the governor in person, and the communication was made to him as he lay for the last time stretched on his prison pallet. "You can get up a free man, Mr Caldigate," said the governor, with his hand on his prisoner's shoulder. "I have here the Queen's pardon. It has reached me this morning." Caldigate got up and looked at the man as though he did not at first understand the words that had been spoken. "It is true, Mr Caldigate. Here is my authority, —and this, no doubt, is a communication of the same nature to yourself." Then Caldigate took the letter, and, with his mind still bewildered, made himself acquainted with the gratifying fact that all the big-wigs were very sorry for the misfortune which had befallen him.

In his state of mind, as it then was, he was by no means disposed to think much of the injustice done to him. He had in store for him, for immediate use, a whole world of glorious bliss. There was his house, his property, his farm, his garden, and the free air. And there would be the knowledge of all those around him that he had not done the treacherous thing of which those wretches had accused him. And added to all this, and above all this, there would be his wife and his child! It was odd enough that a word from the mouth of an exalted Parliamentary personage should be able to give him back one wife and release him from another,—in opposition to the decision of the law,—should avail to restore to his boy the name and birthright of which he had been practically deprived, and should, by a stroke of his pen, undo all that

had been done by the combined efforts of jury, judge, and prosecutor! But he found that so it was. He was pardoned, forsooth, as though he were still a guilty man! Yet he would have back his wife and child, and no one could gainsay him.

"When can I go?" he said, jumping from his bed.

"When you please;—now, at once. But you had better come into the house and breakfast with me first."

"If I may I would rather go instantly. Can you send for a carriage for me?" Then the governor endeavoured to explain to him that it would be better for his wife, and more comfortable for everybody concerned, that she should have been enabled to expect him, if it were only for an hour or two, before his arrival. A communication would doubtless have been made from the Home Office to some one at Folking; and as that would be sent out by the foot-postman, it would not be received before nine in the morning.

But Caldigate would not allow himself to be persuaded. As for eating before he had seen the dear ones at home, that he declared to be impossible. A vision of what that breakfast might be to him with his own wife at his side came before his eyes, and therefore a messenger was at once sent for the vehicle.

But the postmaster, who from the beginning had never been a believer in the Australian wife, and, being a Liberal, was stanch to the Caldigate side of the question, would not allow the letter addressed to the old squire to be retained for the slow operations of the regular messenger, but sent it off manfully, by horse express, before the dawn of day, so that it reached the old squire almost as soon as the other letters reached the prison.

The squire, who was an early man, was shaving himself when the despatch was brought into his room with an intimation that the boy on horseback wanted to know what he was to do next. The boy of course got his breakfast, and Mr Caldigate read his letter, which was as follows :—

“HOME OFFICE, *October 187—*

“MY DEAR SIR,—When you did me the honour of calling upon me here I was able to do no more than express my sympathy as to the misfortune which had fallen upon your family, and to explain to you, I fear not very efficiently, that at that moment the mouths of all of us here were stopped by official prudence as to the matter which was naturally so near your heart. I have now the very great pleasure of informing you that the Secretary of State has this morning received her Majesty’s command to issue a pardon for your son. The official intimation will be sent to him and to the county authorities by this post, and by the time that this reaches you he will be a free man.

“In writing to you, I need hardly explain that the form of a pardon from the Throne is the only mode allowed by the laws of the country for setting aside a verdict which has been found in error upon false evidence. Unfortunately, perhaps, we have not the means of annulling a criminal conviction by a second trial; and therefore, on such occasions as this,—occasions which are very rare,—we have but this lame way of redressing a great grievance. I am happy to think that in this case the future effect will be as complete as though the verdict had been reversed. As to the suffering which has been already endured by your son, by his much-injured wife, and by yourself, I am aware that no redress can be given. It is one of

those cases in which the honest and good have to endure a portion of the evil produced by the dishonesty of the wicked. I can only add to this my best wishes for your son’s happiness on his return to his home, and express a hope that you will understand that I would most willingly have made your visit to the Home Office more satisfactory had it been within my power to do so.—Believe me, very faithfully yours,
“SEPTIMUS BROWN.”

He had not read this letter to the end, and had hardly washed the soap from his face, before he was in his daughter-in-law’s room. She was there with her child, still in bed,—thinking, thinking, thinking whether there would ever come an end to her misery. “It has come,” said the old man.

“What has come?” she asked, jumping up with the baby in her arms. But she knew what had come, for he had the letter open in his hands.

“They have pardoned him. The absurdity of the thing! Pardoning a man whom they know to be innocent, and to have been injured!”

But the “absurdity of the thing,” as the old squire very naturally called it, was nothing to her now. He was to come back to her. She would be in his arms that day. On that very day she would once again hold up her boy to be kissed by his father.

“Where is he? When will he come? Of course I will go to him! You will make them have the waggonette at once; will you not? I will be dressed in five minutes if you will go. Of course I will go to fetch him.”

But this the squire would not allow. The carriage should be sent, of course, and if it met his son on the road, as was probable, there would be no harm done. But it would not be well that the greeting

between the husband and the wife should be in public. So he went out to order the carriage and to prepare himself to accompany it, leaving her to think of her happiness and to make herself ready for the meeting. But when left to herself she could hardly compose herself so as to brush her hair and give herself those little graces which should be pleasant to his eye. "Papa is coming," she said to her boy over and over again. "Papa is coming back. Papa will be here; your own, own, own papa." Then she threw aside the black gown, which she had worn since he left her, and chose for her wear one which he himself had taken pride in buying for her,—the first article of her dress in the choice of which he had been consulted as her husband; and with quick unsteady hand she pulled out some gay ribbon for her baby. Yes;—she and her boy would once again be bright for his sake;—for his sake there should again be gay ribbons and soft silks. "Papa is coming, my own one; your own, own papa!" and then she smothered the child with kisses.

While they were sitting at breakfast at Puritan Grange, the same news reached Mr and Mrs Bolton. The letter to the old man from his son in town was very short, merely stating that the authorities at the Home Office had at last decided that Caldgate should be released from prison. The writer knew that his father would be prepared for this news by his brother; and that all that could be said in the way of argument had been said already. The letters which came to Puritan Grange were few in number, and were generally addressed to the lady. The banker's letters were all received at the house of business in the town. "What is it?" asked the wife, as soon as she saw the long official envelope. But he read it to the

end very slowly before he vouchsafed her any reply. "It has to do with that wretched man in prison," she said. "What is it?"

"He is in prison no longer."

"They have let him escape!"

"The Queen has pardoned him because he was not guilty."

"The Queen! As though she could know whether he be guilty or innocent. What can the Queen know of the manner of his life in foreign parts,—before he had taken my girl away from me?"

"He never married the woman. Let there be no more said about it. He never married her."

But Mrs Bolton, though she was not victorious, was not to be silenced by a single word. No more about it, indeed! There must be very much more about it. "If she was not his wife, she was worse," she said.

"He has repented of that."

"Repented!" she said, with scorn. What very righteous person ever believed in the repentance of an enemy?

"Why should he not repent?"

"He has had leisure in jail."

"Let us hope that he has used it. At any rate he is her husband. There are not many days left to me here. Let me at least see my daughter during the few that remain to me."

"Do I not want to see my own child?"

"I will see her and her boy;—and I will have them called by the name which is theirs. And he shall come,—if he will. Who are you, or who am I, that we shall throw in his teeth the sins of his youth?" Then she became sullen and there was not a word more said between them that morning. But after breakfast the old gardener was sent into town for a fly, and Mr Bolton was taken to the bank.

"And what are we to do now?" asked Mrs Robert Bolton of her

husband, when the tidings were made known to her also at her breakfast-table.

"We must take it as a fact that she is his wife."

"Of course, my dear. If the Secretary of State were to say that I was his wife, I suppose I should have to take it as a fact."

"If he said that you were a goose it might be nearer the mark."

"Really! But a goose must know what she is to do."

"You must write her a letter and call her Mrs Caldigate. That will be an acknowledgment."

"And what shall I say to her?"

"Ask her to come here, if you will."

"And him?"

"And him too. The fact is we have got to swallow it all. I was sure that he had married that woman, and then of course I wanted to get Hester away from him. Now I believe that he never married her, and therefore we must make the best of him as Hester's husband."

"You used to like him."

"Yes;—and perhaps I shall again. But why on earth did he pay twenty thousand pounds to those miscreants? That is what I could not get over. It was that which made me sure he was guilty. It is that which still puzzles me so that I can hardly make up my mind to be quite sure that he is innocent. But still we have to be sure. Perhaps the miracle will be explained some day."

CHAPTER LXII.—JOHN CALDIGATE'S RETURN.

The carriage started with the old man in it as soon as the horses could be harnessed; but on the Folking causeway it met the fly which was bringing John Caldigate to his home,—so that the father and son greeted each other on the street amidst the eyes of the villagers. To them it did not much matter, but the squire had certainly been right in saving Hester from so public a demonstration of her feelings. The two men said hardly a word when they met, but stood there for a moment grasping each other's hands. Then the driver of the fly was paid, and the carriage was turned back to the house. "Is she well?" asked Caldigate.

"She will be well now."

"Has she been ill?"

"She has not been very happy, John, while you have been away from her."

"And the boy?"

"He is all right. He has been spared the heart-breaking knowledge of the injury done to him. It has been very bad with you, I suppose."

"I do not like being in jail, sir. It was the length of the time before me that seemed to crush me. I could not bring myself to believe that I should live to see the end of it."

"The end has come my boy," said his father, again taking him by the hand, "but the cruelty of the thing remains. Had there been another trial as soon as the other evidence was obtained, the struggle would have kept your heart up. It is damnable that a man in an office up in London should have to decide on such a matter, and should be able to take his own time about it!" The grievance was still at the old squire's heart in spite of the amenity of Mr Brown's letter; but John Caldigate, who was approaching his house and his wife, and to whom, after his imprisonment, even the flat fields and dikes were beautiful, did not at the moment much regard the anomaly of the machinery by which he had been liberated.

Hester in the meantime had

donned her silk dress, and had tied the gay bow round her baby's frock, who was quite old enough to be astonished and charmed by the unusual finery in which he was apparelled. Then she sat herself at the window of a bedroom which looked out on to the gravel sweep, with her boy on her lap, and there she was determined to wait till the carriage should come.

But she had hardly seated herself before she heard the wheels. "He is here. He is coming. There he is!" she said to the child. "Look! look! It is papa." But she stood back from the window that she might not be seen. She had thought it out with many fluctuations as to the very spot in which she would meet him. At one moment she had intended to go down to the gate, then to the hall-door, and again she had determined that she would wait for him in the room in which his breakfast was prepared for him. But she had ordered it otherwise at last. When she saw the carriage approaching, she retreated back from the window, so that he should not even catch a glimpse of her; but she had seen him as he sat, still holding his father's hand. Then she ran back to her own chamber and gave her orders as she passed across the passage. "Go down, nurse, and tell him that I am here. Run quick, nurse; tell him to come at once."

But he needed no telling. Whether he had divined her purpose, or whether it was natural to him to fly like a bird to his nest, he rushed up-stairs and was in the room almost before his father had left the carriage. She had the child in her hands when she heard him turn the lock of the door; but before he entered the boy had been laid in his cradle,—and then she was in his arms.

For the first few minutes she

was quite collected, not saying much, but answering his questions by a word or two. Oh yes, she was well; and baby was well,—quite well. He, too, looked well, she said, though there was something of sadness in his face. "But I will kiss that away,—so soon, so soon." She had always expected that he would come back long, long before the time that had been named. She had been sure of it, she declared, because that it was impossible that so great injustice should be done. But the last fortnight had been very long. When those wicked people had been put in prison she had thought that then surely he would come. But now he was there, with his arms round her, safe in his own home, and everything was well. Then she lifted the baby up to be kissed again and again, and began to dance and spring in her joy. Then, suddenly, she almost threw the child into his arms, and seating herself, covered her face with her hands and began to sob with violence. When he asked her, with much embracing, to compose herself, sitting close to her, kissing her again and again, she shook her head as it lay upon his shoulder, and then burst out into a fit of laughter. "What does it matter?" she said after a while, as he knelt at her knees; — "what does it matter? My boy's father has come back to him. My boy has got his own name, and he is an honest true Caldigate; and no one again will tell me that another woman owns my husband, my own husband, the father of my boy. It almost killed me, John, when they said that you were not mine. And yet I knew that they said it falsely. I never doubted for a moment. I knew that you were my own, and that my boy had a right to his father's name. But it was hard to hear them say so, John. It was hard to

bear when my mother swore that it was so!"

At last they went down and found the old squire waiting for his breakfast. "I should think," said he, "that you would be glad to see a loaf of bread on a clean board again, and to know that you may cut it as you please. Did they give you enough where you were?"

"I didn't think much about it, sir."

"But you must think about it now," said Hester. "To please me you must like everything; your tea, and your fresh eggs, and the butter and the cream. You must let yourself be spoilt for a time just to compensate me for your absence."

"You have made yourself smart to receive him at any rate," said the squire, who had become thoroughly used to the black gown which she had worn morning, noon, and evening while her husband was away.

"Why should I not be smart," she said, "when my man has come to me? For whose eyes shall I put on the raiment that is his own but for his? I was much lower than a widow in the eyes of all men; but now I have got my husband back again. And my boy shall wear the very best that he has, so that his father may see him smile at his own gaudiness. Yes, father, I may be smart now. There were moments in which I thought that I might never wear more the pretty things which he had given me." Then she rose from her seat again, and hung on his neck, and wept and sobbed till he feared that her heart-strings would break with joy.

So the morning passed away among them till about eleven o'clock, when the servant brought in word that Mr Holt and one or two other of the tenants wanted to see the young master. The squire had been sitting alone in the back room so that the husband and wife might

be left together; but he had heard voices with which he was familiar, and he now came through to ask Hester whether the visitors should be sent away for the present. But Hester would not have turned a dog from the door which had been true to her husband through his troubles. "Let them come," she said. "They have been so good to me, John, through it all! They have always known that baby was a true Caldigate."

Holt and the other farmers were shown into the room, and Holt as a matter of course became the spokesman. When Caldigate had shaken hands with them all round, each muttering his word of welcome, then Holt began: "We wish you to know, squire, that we, none of us, ain't been comfortable in our minds here at Folking since that crawling villain Crinkett came and showed himself at our young squire's christening."

"That we ain't," said Timothy Purvidge, another Netherden farmer.

"I haven't had much comfort since that day myself, Mr Purvidge," said Caldigate,— "not till this morning."

"Nor yet haven't none of us," continued Mr Holt, very impressively. "We knowed as you had done all right. We was as sure as the church tower. Lord love you, sir, when it was between our young missus,—who'll excuse me for noticing these bright colours, and for saying how glad I am to see her come out once again as our squire's wife should come out,—between her and that bedangled woman as I seed in the court, it didn't take no one long to know what was the truth!" The eloquence here was no doubt better than the argument, as Caldigate must have felt when he remembered how fond he had once been of that "bedangled woman." Hester, who,

though she knew the whole story, did not at this moment join two and two together, thought that Mr Holt put the case uncommonly well. "No! we knew," he continued, with a wave of his hand. "But the jury weren't Netherden men,—nor yet Utterden, Mr Half-acre," he added, turning to a tenant from the other parish. "And they couldn't tell how it all was as we could. And there was that judge, who would have believed any miscreant as could be got anywhere, to swear away a man's liberty,—or his wife and family, which is a'most worse. We saw how it was to be when he first looked out of his eye at the two post-office gents, and others who spoke up for the young squoire. It was to be guilty. We know'd it. But it didn't any way change our minds. As to Crinkett and Smith and them others, we saw that they were ruffians. We never doubted that. But we saw as there was a bad time coming to you, Mr John. Then we was unhappy; unhappy along of you, Mr John,—but a'most worse as to this dear lady and the boy."

"My missus cried that you wouldn't have believed," said Mr Purvidge. "'If that's true,' said my missus, 'she ain't nobody; and it's my belief she's as true a wife as ever stretched herself aside her husband.'" Then Hester bethought herself what present, of all presents, would be most acceptable to Mrs Purvidge, who was a red-faced, red-armed, hard-working old woman, peculiarly famous for making cheeses.

"We all knew it," said Mr Holt, slapping his thigh with great energy. "And now, in spite of 'em all, judge, jury, and lying witnesses,—the king has got his own again." At this piece of triumphant rhetoric there was a

cheer from all the farmers. "And so we have come to wish you all joy, and particularly you, ma'am, with your boy. Things have been said of you, ma'am, hard to bear, no doubt. But not a word of the kind at Folking, nor yet in Netherden;—nor yet at Utterden, Mr Halfacre. But all this is over, and we do hope that you, ma'am, and the young squoire 'll live long, and the young un of all long after we are gone to our rest,—and that you'll be as fond of Folking as Folking is of you. I can't say no fairer." Then the tray was brought in with wine, and everybody drank everybody's health, and there was another shaking of hands all round. Mr Purvidge, it was observed, drank the health of every separate member of the family in a separate bumper, pressing the edge of the glass securely to his lips, and then sending the whole contents down his throat at one throw with a chuck from his little finger.

The two Caldigates went out to see their friends as far as the gate, and while they were still within the grounds there came a merry peal from the bells of Netherden church-tower. "I knew they'd be at it," said Mr Holt.

"And quite right too," said Mr Halfacre. "We'd rung over at Utterden, only we've got nothing but that little tinkling thing as is more fitter to swing round a bullock's neck than on a church-top."

"I told 'em as they should have beer," said Mr Brownby, whose house stood on Folking Causeway, "and they shall have beer!" Mr Brownby was a silent man, and added nothing to this one pertinent remark.

"As to beer," said Mr Halfacre, "we'd 'ave found the beer at Utterden. There wouldn't have been no grudging the beer, Mr Brownby, no more than there is in the lower

parish ; but you can't get up a peal merely on beer. You've got to have bells."

While they were still standing at the gate, Mr Bromley the clergyman joined them, and walked back towards the house with the two Caldigates. He, too, had come to offer his congratulations, and to assure the released prisoner that he never believed the imputed guilt. But he would not go into the house, surmising that on such a day the happy wife would not care to see many visitors. But Caldigate asked him to take a turn about the grounds, being anxious to learn something from the outside world. "What do they say to it all at Babington?"

"I think they're a little divided."

"My aunt has been against me, of course."

"At first she was, I fancy. It was natural that people should believe till Shand came back."

"Poor, dear old Dick. I must look after Dick. What about Julia?"

"*Spretæ injuria formæ!*" said Mr Bromley. "What were you to expect?"

"I'll forgive her. And Mr Smirkie? I don't think Smirkie ever looked on me with favourable eyes."

Then the clergyman was forced to own that Smirkie too had been among those who had believed the woman's story. "But you have to remember how natural it is that a man should think a verdict to be right. In our country a wrong verdict is an uncommon occurrence. It requires close personal acquaintance and much personal confidence to justify a man in supposing that twelve jurymen should come to an erroneous decision. I thought that they were wrong. But still I knew that I could hardly defend my opinion before the outside world."

"It is all true," said Caldigate ; "and I have made up my mind that

I will be angry with no one who will begin to believe me innocent from this day."

His mind, however, was considerably exercised in regard to the Boltons, as to whom he feared that they would not even yet allow themselves to be convinced. For his wife's happiness their conversion was of infinitely more importance than that of all the outside world beyond. When the gloom of the evening had come, she too came out and walked with him about the garden and grounds with the professed object of showing him whatever little changes might have been made. But the conversation soon fell back upon the last great incident of their joint lives.

"But your mother cannot refuse to believe what everybody now declares to be true," he argued.

"Mamma is so strong in her feelings."

"She must know they would not have let me out of prison in opposition to the verdict until they were very sure of what they were doing."

Then she told him all that had occurred between her and her mother since the trial,—how her mother had come out to Folking and had implored her to return to Chester-ton, and had then taken herself away in dudgeon because she had not prevailed. "But nothing,—nothing would have made me leave the place," she said, "after what they tried to do when I was there before. Except to go to church, I have not once been outside the gate."

"Your brothers will come round, I suppose. Robert has been very angry with me, I know. But he is a man of the world and a man of sense."

"We must take it as it will come, John. Of course it would be very much to me to have my father and mother restored to me. It would be very much to know that my

brothers were again my friends. But when I remember how I prayed yesterday but for one thing, and that now, to-day, that one thing has come to me ;—how I have got that which, when I waked this morning, seemed to me to be all the world to me, the want of which made my heart so sick that even my baby could not make me glad, I feel that nothing ought now to make me unhappy. I have got you, John, and everything else is nothing." As he stooped in the dark to kiss her again among the rose-bushes, he felt that it was almost worth his while to have been in prison.

After dinner there came a message to them across the ferry from Mr Holt. Would they be so good as to walk down to the edge of the great dike, opposite to Twopenny Farm, at nine o'clock. As a part of the message, Mr Holt sent word that at that hour the moon would be rising. Of course they went

down to the dike,—Mr Caldigate, John Caldigate, and Hester ;—and there, outside Mr Holt's farmyard, just far enough to avoid danger to the hay-ricks and corn-stacks, there was blazing an enormous bonfire. All the rotten timber about the place and two or three tar-barrels had been got together, and there were collected all the inhabitants of the two parishes. The figures of the boys and girls and of the slow rustics with their wives could be seen moving about indistinctly across the water by the fluttering flame of the bonfire. And their own figures, too, were observed in the moonlight, and John Caldigate was welcomed back to his home by a loud cheer from all his neighbours.

"I did not see much of it myself," Mr Holt said afterwards, "because me and my missus was busy among the stacks all the time, looking after the sparks. The bonfire might a' been too big, you know."

CHAPTER LXIII.—HOW MRS BOLTON WAS QUITE CONQUERED.

Nearly a week passed over their heads at Puritan Grange before anything further was either done or said, or even written, as to the return of John Caldigate to his own home and to his own wife. In the meantime, both Mrs Robert and Mrs Daniel had gone out to Folking and made visits of ceremony,—visits which were intended to signify their acknowledgment that Mrs John Caldigate was Mrs John Caldigate. With Mrs Daniel the matter was quite ceremonious and short. Mrs Robert suggested something as to a visit into Cambridge, saying that her husband would be delighted if Hester and Mr Caldigate would come and dine and sleep. Hester immediately felt that something had been gained, but she declined the proposed visit for the present. "We have both

of us," she said, "gone through so much, that we are not quite fit to go out anywhere yet." Mrs Robert had hardly expected them to come, but she had observed her husband's behests. So far there had been a family reconciliation during the first few days after the prisoner's release ; but no sign came from Mrs Bolton ; and Mr Bolton, though he had given his orders, was not at first urgent in requiring obedience to them. Then she received a letter from Hester.

"DEAREST, DEAREST MAMMA,—Of course you know that my darling husband has come back to me. All I want now to make me quite, quite happy is to have you once again as my own, own mother. Will you not send me a line to say that it shall all be as though these

last long dreary months had never been ;—so that I may go to you and show you my baby once again ? And, dear mamma, say one word to me to let me know that you know that he is my husband. Tell papa to say so also.—Your most affectionate daughter,

“HESTER CALDIGATE.”

Mrs Bolton found this letter on the breakfast-table, lying, as was usual with her letters, close to her plate, and she read it without saying a word to her husband. Then she put it in her pocket, and still did not say a word. Before the middle of the day she had almost made up her mind that she would keep the letter entirely to herself. It was well, she thought, that he had not seen it, and no good could be done by showing it to him. But he had been in the breakfast-parlour before her, had seen the envelope, and had recognised the handwriting. They were sitting together after lunch, and she was just about to open the book of sermons with which, at that time, she was regaling him, when he stopped her with a question. “What did Hester say in her letter?”

Even those who intend to be truthful are sometimes surprised into a lie. “What letter?” she said. But she remembered herself at once, and knew that she could not afford to be detected in a falsehood. “That note from Hester? Yes ;—I had a note this morning.”

“I know you had a note. What does she say?”

“She tells me that he,—he has come back.”

“And what else? She was well aware that we knew that without her telling us.”

“She wants to come here.”

“Bid her come.”

“Of course she shall come.”

“And him.” To this she made

no answer, except with the muscles of her face, which involuntarily showed her antagonism to the order she had received. “Bid her bring her husband with her,” said the banker.

“He would not come,—though I were to ask him.”

“Then let it be on his own head.”

“I will not ask him,” she said at last, looking away across the room at the blank wall. “I will not belie my own heart. I do not want to see him here. He has so far got the better of me ; but I will not put my neck beneath his feet for him to tread on me.”

Then there was a pause ;—not that he intended to allow her disobedience to pass, but that he was driven to bethink himself how he might best oppose her. “Woman,” he said, “you can neither forgive nor forget.”

“He has got my child from me,—my only child.”

“Does he persecute your child? Is she not happy in his love? Even if he have trespassed against you, who are you that you should not forgive a trespass? I say that he shall be asked to come here, that men may know that in her own father’s house she is regarded as his true and honest wife.”

“Men !” she murmured. “That men may know !” But she did not again tell him that she would not obey his command.

She sat all the remainder of the day alone in her room, hardly touching the work which she had beside her, not opening the book which lay by her hand on the table. She was thinking of the letter which she knew that she must write, but she did not rise to get pen and ink, nor did she even propose to herself that the letter should be written then. Not a word was said about it in the evening. On the next morning the

banker pronounced his intention of going into town, but before he started he referred to the order he had given. "Have you written to Hester?" he asked. She merely shook her head. "Then write to-day." So saying, he tottered down the steps with his stick and got into the fly.

About noon she did get her paper and ink, and very slowly wrote her letter. Though her heart was, in truth, yearning towards her daughter,—though at that moment she could have made any possible sacrifice for her child had her child been apart from the man she hated,—she could not in her sullenness force her words into a form of affection.

"DEAR HESTER," she said, "of course I shall be glad to see you and your boy. On what day would it suit you to come, and how long would you like to stay? I fear you will find me and your father but dull companions after the life you are now used to. If Mr Caldigate would like to come with you, your father bids me say that he will be glad to see him.—Your loving mother,

"MARY BOLTON."

She endeavoured, in writing her letter, to obey the commands that had been left with her, but she could not go nearer to it than this. She could not so far belie her heart as to tell her daughter that she herself would be glad to see the man. Then it took her long to write the address. She did write it at last;

Mrs JOHN CALDIGATE,
FOLKING.

But as she wrote it she told herself that she believed it to be a lie.

When the letter reached Hester there was a consultation over it, to

which old Mr Caldigate was admitted. It was acknowledged on all sides that anything would be better than a family quarrel. The spirit in which the invitation had been written was to be found in every word of it. There was not a word to show that Mrs Bolton had herself accepted the decision to which every one else had come in the matter;—everything, rather, to show that she had not done so. But, as the squire said, it does not do to inquire too closely into all people's inner beliefs. "If everybody were to say what he thinks about everybody, nobody would ever go to see anybody." It was soon decided that Hester, with her baby, should go on an early day to Puritan Grange, and should stay there for a couple of nights. But there was a difficulty as to Caldigate himself. He was naturally enough anxious to send Hester without him, but she was as anxious to take him. "It isn't for my own sake," she said,—"because I shall like to have you there with me. Of course it will be very dull for you, but it will be so much better that we should all be reconciled, and that every one should know that we are so."

"It would only be a pretence," said he.

"People must pretend sometimes, John," she answered. At last it was decided that he should take her, reaching the place about the hour of lunch, so that he might again break bread in her father's house,—that he should then leave her there, and that at the end of the two days she should return to Folking.

On the day named they reached Puritan Grange at the hour fixed. Both Caldigate and Hester were very nervous as to their reception, and got out of the carriage almost without a word to each other. The old gardener, who had been so busy

during Hester's imprisonment, was there to take the luggage; and Hester's maid carried the child as Caldigate, with his wife behind him, walked up the steps and rang the bell. There was no coming out to meet them, no greeting them even in the hall. Mr Bolton was perhaps too old and too infirm for such running out, and it was hardly within his nature to do so. They were shown into the well-known morning sitting-room, and there they found Hester's father in his chair, and Mrs Bolton standing up to receive them.

Hester, after kissing her father, threw herself into her mother's arms before a word had been said to Caldigate. Then the banker addressed him with a set speech, which no doubt had been prepared in the old man's mind. "I am very glad," he said, "that you have brought this unhappy matter to so good a conclusion, Mr Caldigate."

"It has been a great trouble,—worse almost for Hester than for me."

"Yes, it has been sad enough for Hester,—and the more so because it was natural that others should believe that which the jury and the judge declared to have been proved. How should any one know otherwise?"

"Just so, Mr Bolton. If they will accept the truth now, I shall be satisfied."

"It will come, but perhaps slowly to some folk. You should in justice remember that your own early follies have tended to bring this all about."

It was a grim welcome, and the last speech was one which Caldigate found it difficult to answer. It was so absolutely true that it admitted of no answer. He thought that it might have been spared, and shrugged his shoulders as though to say that that part of the subject

was one which he did not care to discuss. Hester heard it, and quivered with anger even in her mother's arms. Mrs Bolton heard it, and in the midst of her kisses made an inward protest against the word used. Follies indeed! Why had he not spoken out the truth as he knew it, and told the man of his vices?

But it was necessary that she too should address him. "I hope I see you quite well, Mr Caldigate," she said, giving him her hand.

"The prison has not disagreed with me," he said, with an attempt at a smile, "though it was not an agreeable residence."

"If you used your leisure there to meditate on your soul's welfare, it may have been of service to you."

It was very grim. But the banker having made his one severe speech, became kind in his manner, and almost genial. He asked after his son-in-law's future intentions, and when he was told that they thought of spending some months abroad so as to rid themselves in that way of the immediate record of their past misery, he was gracious enough to express his approval of the plan; and then when the lunch was announced, and the two ladies had passed out of the room, he said a word to his son-in-law in private. "As I was convinced, Mr Caldigate, when I first heard the evidence, that that other woman was your wife, and was therefore very anxious to separate my daughter from you, so am I satisfied now that the whole thing was a wicked plot."

"I am very glad to hear you say that, sir."

"Now, if you please, we will go in to lunch."

As long as Caldigate remained in the house Mrs Bolton was almost silent. The duties of a hostess she performed in a stiff, ungainly way.

She asked him whether he would have hashed mutton or cold beef, and allowed him to pour a little sherry into her wine-glass. But beyond this there was not much conversation. Mr Bolton had said what he had to say, and sat leaning forward with his chin over his plate perfectly silent. It is to be supposed that he had some pleasure in having his daughter once more beneath his roof, especially as he had implored his wife not to deprive him of that happiness during the small remainder of his days. But he sat there with no look of joy upon his face. That she should be stern, sullen, and black-browed was to be expected. She had been compelled to entertain their guest; and was not at all the woman to bear such compulsion meekly.

The hour at last wore itself away, and the carriage which was to take Caldigate back to Folking was again at the door. It was a Tuesday. "You will send for me on Thursday," she said to him in a whisper.

"Certainly."

"Early; after breakfast, you know. I suppose you will not come yourself."

"Not here, I think. I have done all the good that I can do, and it is pleasant to no one. But you shall pick me up in the town. I shall go in and see your brother Robert." Then he went, and Hester was left with her parents.

As she turned back from the hall-door she found her mother standing at the foot of the stairs, waiting for her. "Shall I come with you, mamma?" she said. Holding each other's arms they went up, and so passed into Hester's room, where the nurse was sitting with the boy. "Let her go into my room," said the elder lady. So the nurse took the baby away, and they were alone together. "Oh, Hester, Hester, my child!" said the mother,

flinging her arms wildly round her daughter.

The whole tenor of her face was changed at that moment. Even to Hester she had been stern, forbidding, and sullen. There had not been a gracious movement about her lips or eyes since the visitors had come. A stranger, could a stranger have seen it all, would have said that the mother did not love her child, that there was no touch of tenderness about the woman's heart. But now, when she was alone, with the one thing on earth that was dear to her, she melted at once. In a moment Hester found herself seated on the sofa, with her mother kneeling before her, sobbing, and burying her face in the loved one's lap. "You love me, Hester,—still."

"Love you, mamma! You know I love you."

"Not as it used to be. I am nothing to you now. I can do nothing for you now. You turn away from me, because—because—because——"

"I have never turned away from you, mamma."

"Because I could not bear that you should be taken away from me and given to him."

"He is good, mamma. If you would only believe that he is good!"

"He is not good. God only is good, my child."

"He is good to me."

"Ah, yes;—he has taken you from me. When I thought you were coming back, in trouble, in disgrace from the world, nameless, a poor injured thing, with your nameless babe, then I comforted myself because I thought that I could be all and everything to you. I would have poured balm into the hurt wounds. I would have prayed with you, and you and I would have been as one before the Lord."

"You are not sorry, mamma, that I have got my husband again?"

"Oh, I have tried,—I have tried not to be sorry."

"You do not believe now that that woman was his wife?"

Then the old colour came back upon her face, and something of the old look, and the tenderness was quenched in her eyes, and the softness of her voice was gone. "I do not know," she said.

"Mamma, you must know. Get up and sit by me till I tell you. You must teach yourself to know this,—to be quite sure of it. You must not think that your daughter is,—is living in adultery with the husband of another woman. To me who knew him there has never been a shadow of a doubt, not a taint of fear to darken the certainty of my faith. It could not have been so, perhaps, with you who have not known his nature. But now, now, when all of them, from the Queen downwards, have declared that this charge has been a libel, when even the miscreants themselves have told against themselves, when the very judge has gone back from the word in which he was so confident, shall my mother,—and my mother only,—think that I am a wretched, miserable, nameless outcast, with a poor nameless, fatherless baby? I am John Caldigate's wife before God's throne, and my child is his child, and his lawful heir, and owns his father's name. My husband is to me before all the world,—first, best, dearest,—my king, my man, my

master, and my lover. Above all things, he is my husband." She had got up, and was standing before her mother with her arms folded before her breast, and the fire glanced from her eyes as she spoke. "But, mamma, because I love him more, I do not love you less."

"Oh yes, oh yes; so much less."

"No, mamma. It is given to us, of God, so to love our husband; 'For the husband is head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church.' You would not have me forget such teaching as that?"

"No,—my child; no."

"When I went out and had him given to me for my husband, of course I loved him best. The Lord do so to me and more also if aught but death part him and me! But shall that make my mother think that her girl's heart is turned away from her? Mamma, say that he is my husband." The frown came back, and the woman sat silent and sullen, but there was something of vacillating indecision in her face. "Mamma," repeated Hester, "say that he is my husband."

"I suppose so," said the woman, very slowly.

"Mamma, say that it is so, and bless your child."

"God bless you, my child."

"And you know that it is so?"

"Yes." The word was hardly spoken, but the lips of the one were close to the ear of the other, and the sound was heard, and the assent was acknowledged.

CHAPTER LXIV.—CONCLUSION.

The web of our story has now been woven, the piece is finished, and it is only necessary that the loose threads should be collected, so that there may be no unravelling. In such chronicles as this, something no doubt might be left to the

imagination without serious injury to the story; but the reader, I think, feels a deficiency when, through tedium or coldness, the writer omits to give all the information which he possesses.

Among the male personages of

my story, Bagwax should perhaps be allowed to stand first. It was his energy and devotion to his peculiar duties which, after the verdict, served to keep alive the idea that that verdict had been unjust. It was through his ingenuity that Judge Bramber was induced to refer the inquiry back to Scotland Yard, and in this way to prevent the escape of Crinkett and Euphemia Smith. Therefore we will first say a word as to Bagwax and his history.

It was rumoured at the time that Sir John Joram and Mr Brown, having met each other at the club after the order for Caldigate's release had been given, and discussing the matter with great interest, united in giving praise to Bagwax. Then Sir John told the story of those broken hopes, of the man's desire to travel, and of the faith and honesty with which he sacrificed his own aspirations for the good of the poor lady whose husband had been so cruelly taken away from her. Then,—as it was said at the time,—an important letter was sent from the Home Office to the Postmaster-General, giving Mr Bagwax much praise, and suggesting that a very good thing would be done to the colony of New South Wales if that ingenious and skilful master of post-marks could be sent out to Sydney with the view of setting matters straight in the Sydney office.* There was then much correspondence with the Colonial Office, which did not at first care very much about Bagwax; but at last the order was given by the Treasury, and Bagwax went. There were many tears shed on the occasion at Apricot Villa. Jemima Curly-

down thought that she also should be allowed to see Sydney, and was in favour of an immediate marriage with this object. But Bagwax felt that the boisterous ocean might be unpropitious to the delights of a honeymoon; and Mr Curlydown reminded his daughter of all the furniture which would thus be lost. Bagwax went as a gay bachelor, and spent six happy months in the bright colony. He did not effect much, as the delinquent who had served Crinkett in his base purposes had already been detected and punished before his arrival; but he was treated with extreme courtesy by the Sydney officials, and was able to bring home with him a treasure in the shape of a newly-discovered manner of tying mail-bags. So that when the 'Sydney Intelligencer' boasted that the great English professor who had come to instruct them all had gone home instructed, there was some truth in it. He was married immediately after his return, and Jemima his wife has the advantage, in her very pretty drawing-room, of every shilling that he made by the voyage. My readers will be glad to hear that soon afterwards he was appointed Inspector-General of Post-marks to the great satisfaction of all the post-office.

One of the few things which Caldigate did before he took his wife abroad was to "look after Dick Shand." It was manifest to all concerned that Dick could do no good in England. His yellow trousers and the manners which accompanied them were not generally acceptable in merchants' offices and suchlike places. He knew nothing about English farming, which, for those who have not

* I hope my friends in the Sydney post-office will take no offence should this story ever reach their ears. I know how well the duties are done in that office, and, between ourselves, I think that Mr Bagwax's journey was quite unnecessary.

learned the work early, is an expensive amusement rather than a trade by which bread can be earned. There seemed to be hardly a hope for Dick in England. But he had done some good among the South Sea Islanders. He knew their ways and could manage them. He was sent out, therefore, with a small capital to be junior partner on a sugar estate in Queensland. It need hardly be said that the small capital was lent to him by John Caldigate. There he took steadily to work, and it is hoped by his friends that he will soon begin to repay the loan.

The uncle, aunt, and cousins at Babington soon renewed their intimacy with John Caldigate, and became intimate with Hester. The old squire still turned up his nose at them, as he had done all his life, calling them *Bœotians*, and reminding his son that Suffolk had ever been a silly country. But the Babingtons, one and all, knew this, and had no objection to be accounted thick-headed as long as they were acknowledged to be prosperous, happy, and comfortable. It had always been considered at Babington that young Caldigate was brighter and more clever than themselves; and yet he had been popular with them as a cousin of whom they ought to be proud. He was soon restored to his former favour, and after his return from the Continent spent a fortnight at the Hall, with his wife, very comfortably. Julia, indeed, was not there, nor Mr Smirkie. Among all their neighbours and acquaintances Mr Smirkie was the last to drop the idea that there must have been something in that story of an Australian marriage. His theory of the law on the subject was still incorrect. The Queen's pardon, he said, could not do away with the verdict, and therefore he doubted

whether the couple could be regarded as man and wife. He was very anxious that they should be married again, and with great good-nature offered to perform the ceremony himself either at Plum-cum-Pippins or even in the drawing-room at Folking.

"Suffolk to the very backbone!" was the remark of the Cambridge-shire squire when he heard of this very kind offer. But even he at last came round, under his wife's persuasion, when he found that the paternal mansion was likely to be shut against him unless he yielded.

Hester's second tour with her husband was postponed for some weeks, because it was necessary that her husband should appear as a witness against Crinkett and Euphemia Smith. They were tried also at Cambridge, but not before Judge Bramber. The woman never yielded an inch. When she found how it was going with her, she made fast her money, and with infinite pluck resolved that she would endure with patience whatever might be in store for her, and wait for better times. When put into the dock she pleaded not guilty with a voice that was audible only to the jailer standing beside her, and after that did not open her mouth during the trial. Crinkett made a great effort to be admitted as an additional witness against his comrade, but, having failed in that, pleaded guilty at last. He felt that there was no hope for him with such a weight of evidence against him, and calculated that his punishment might thus be lighter, and that he would save himself the cost of an expensive defence. In the former hope he was deceived, as the two were condemned to the same term of imprisonment. When the woman heard that she was to be confined for three years with hard labour

her spirit was almost broken. But she made no outward sign; and as she was led away out of the dock she looked round for Caldigate, to wither him with the last glance of her reproach. But Caldigate, who had not beheld her misery without some pang at his heart, had already left the court.

Judge Bramber never opened his mouth upon the matter to a single human being. He was a man who, in the bosom of his family, did not say much about the daily work of his life, and who had but few friends sufficiently intimate to be trusted with his judicial feelings. The Secretary of State was enabled to triumph in the correctness of his decision, but it may be a question whether Judge Bramber enjoyed the triumph. The matter had gone luckily for the Secretary; but how would it have been had Crinkett and the woman been acquitted?—how would it have been had Caldigate broken down in his evidence, and been forced to admit that there had been a marriage of some kind? No doubt the accusation had been false. No doubt the verdict had been erroneous. But the man had brought it upon himself by his own egregious folly, and would have had no just cause for complaint had he been kept in prison till the second case had been tried. It was thus that Judge Bramber regarded the matter;—but he said not a word about it to any one.

When the second trial was over, Caldigate and his wife started for Paris, but stayed a few days on their way with William Bolton in London. He and his wife were quite ready to receive Hester and her husband with open arms. "I tell you fairly," said he to Caldigate, "that when there was a doubt, I thought it better that you and Hester should be apart. You would

have thought the same had she been your sister. Now I am only too happy to congratulate both of you that the truth has been brought to light."

On their return Mrs Robert Bolton was very friendly,—and Robert Bolton himself was at last brought round to acknowledge that his convictions had been wrong. But there was still much that stuck in his throat. "Why did John Caldigate pay twenty thousand pounds to those persons when he knew that they had hatched a conspiracy against himself?" This question he asked his brother William over and over again, and he never could be satisfied with any answer which his brother could give him.

Once he asked the question of Caldigate himself. "Because I felt that, in honour, I owed it to them," said Caldigate; "and perhaps a little, too, because I felt that, if they took themselves off at once, your sister might be spared something of the pain which she has suffered." But still it was unintelligible to Robert Bolton that any man in his senses should give away so large a sum of money with so slight a prospect of any substantial return.

Hester often goes to see her mother, but Mrs Bolton has never again been at Folking, and probably never will again visit that house. She is a woman whose heart is not capable of many changes, and who cannot readily give herself to new affections. But having once owned that John Caldigate is her daughter's husband, she now alleges no further doubt on that matter. She writes the words "Mrs John Caldigate" without a struggle, and does take delight in her daughter's visits.

When last I heard from Folking, Mrs John Caldigate's second boy had just been born.

THE DESTRUCTION OF SZEGEDIN.—PERSONAL NOTES.

EARLY in March news reached Buda-Pesth of impending floods in the Theiss valley of a serious and exceptional character. During the past winter more snow had fallen all over the country than is generally the case even in Hungary, while at the same time the cold had been less than usual. At Buda-Pesth, though the Danube was covered with drift-ice, it had never been completely frozen over. We may assume, therefore, that the snow lay, not in its usual consolidated and frozen state, but lightly packed, so to speak, and ready to melt at the first thaw. Unfortunately, in February a marked, and, for the time of the year, very unusual rise in the temperature took place, accompanied by torrents of rain. The whole eastern bend of the Carpathian horseshoe, which is in fact the watershed of the Theiss and its tributaries, poured down its thousand streams into the great Hungarian plain; and fears were entertained of inundations as serious as those in the spring of 1876, when the capital itself was threatened by the rise of the Danube.

During a residence of five years in Hungary, I have had some notable experiences of storms and floods. The first phenomenon of the kind which I witnessed was the remarkable storm of the 26th of June 1875. On that occasion a waterspout burst on the mountains behind Buda, and together with wind and hail destroyed a considerable amount of property in the town and neighbourhood, causing also the death of nearly sixty people. The fury of this storm was far exceeded by the catastrophe which occurred on the last night of August 1878, at Miskolcz and

Erlau, in the north-east of Hungary.

Buda-Pesth has experienced no less than fourteen inundations in this century; the most disastrous being that of 1838, which destroyed some four thousand houses and caused great loss of life. Of some incidents in the alarming inundation of 1876 I will speak later, merely observing here, that though the worst was averted, and the capital escaped almost by a miracle, yet the destruction of property which did take place involved serious loss and great misery. Something like twenty thousand people were houseless and homeless for several weeks. The possible recurrence of such an event must at all times cause the gravest anxiety.

With full knowledge of the dangerous behaviour of these great rivers, and the terrible havoc their waters are capable of inflicting, it will not be wondered at that the public mind became greatly excited as each day more and more alarming news reached us from the Theiss valley. It was in this condition of mind that I left my house in the fortress of Buda on Sunday morning, the 9th of March, to seek the latest intelligence at the club in Pesth. On my way thither I encountered Lieutenant Zubovics, whose name is well known to many in England by his swimming feats over the Danube, Thames, and Seine on horseback, and for his ride for a wager from Vienna to Paris. Lieutenant Zubovics at once informed me that the last news from Szegedin was so alarming that he had determined to organise a volunteer life-saving corps to render assistance in case of need; and he proposed to start that same night, as

no time was to be lost. Having enrolled myself in the corps, we went down to the lower quay in search of the captain of one of the Francis Canal Towage Company's steamers, who had orders to place all the rowing boats he could spare at our disposal. When we found the captain he set to work immediately to give us every possible assistance; but we were in a difficulty about getting the boats conveyed from the Danube to the railway station, which is a long way from the river. This being Sunday afternoon, everything was shut, and we could get no men, much less obtain conveyances to transport the boats, which, it may be remarked, were heavy river-boats. So in the end we gave orders for these to follow us by a later train. As it turned out, we requisitioned fourteen of the pleasure-boats on the lake in the Stadtwäldchen, which is not far from the railway station. Our small corps of six now separated, half were sent round the town to enlist friends, the others being left to busy themselves about the necessary preparations for getting together the life-saving apparatus, torches, and other things requisite for the possible emergency. We had settled to meet at the Redoute by eight that night for final arrangements before starting by the ten o'clock train for Félégyháza. By the evening the volunteer corps had increased to fourteen in number, but what with one thing and another we found it difficult to get everything settled in time; in fact we only got off by a later train, and did not arrive at Félégyháza before eleven o'clock on the morning of the 10th of March.

We had, of course, started from Buda-Pesth in the dark, and when daylight dawned we found ourselves travelling over the vast plain or *alföld* which is the peculiar

feature of Hungarian geography. Roughly speaking, the plain is enclosed on three sides by the Carpathian Mountains, with the Danube for a boundary on the fourth side. In prehistoric times, this part of the world was far different in aspect: what is now the richest grain-producing district in Europe, was in former times the bed of an inland sea or series of great lakes. These plains, overspread by sand, gravel, and by a kind of rich mud, or by alluvial deposits underlain by fresh-water limestones, "may be considered as having been formed," says Professor Hull, "beneath the waters of a great lake during different periods of repletion or partial exhaustion, dating downwards from the Miocene period. It is also necessary to recall the fact that the *only* issue which the Danube and the tributary waters of all the Hungarian rivers now find in the magnificent gorge of Kasan, was in the prehistoric period barred by an unbroken mountain-chain. "The waters seem to have been pent up several hundred feet above the present surface, and thus thrown back on the plains of Hungary." M. Reclus says, "Les défilés par lesquels le Danube, grossi de la Tisza (Theiss), de la Temes, et de la Save, s'échappe de la plaine hongroise à travers le mu transversal des Carpates, offrent un aspect des plus grandioses." Later on we shall have occasion to refer to this question of the exit of the Hungarian waters.

In recalling the *drame géologique*, we must take into account the interesting fact that the inland sea or lake which covered the Hungarian plain was bordered by a chain of active volcanoes, vomiting forth masses of "trachytic and basaltic lava and tuff." But in the course of ages the volcanic fires have died out, and the waters of the lake

have been drained, leaving a rich heritage to mankind. The bed of the old sea comprises an area of 37,400 square miles, mostly consisting of what is called *tiefland* or deep land, and so rich that the merest scratchings of the plough can, without skill or labour, produce crops almost unequalled in quantity and variety elsewhere.

The first view of the plain is depressing in the extreme. You behold a level, featureless, interminable stretch of earth, with the heavens above and around you, like the folds of a vast tent; where neither hill nor forest throws any shadow, and where the pathway of the sun is visible from the rising up to the going down thereof. This great plain has been aptly called *une mer terrestre*; and under certain atmospheric conditions the illusion is complete. It appears even like the sea itself, rippled by green-wave furrows, or calmed into utter stillness by widespreading level mists that meet the sky-line. Dreary as the plain may seem to the stranger, it is a place beloved by the native with an attachment equal to the Switzer's love for the Alps. The shepherd of the lonely *pussta* has no more thought of wandering away from the dear familiar scene than has the forest-tree which is rooted in the earth. This district is in fact the cradle of the true Magyar race, where are still to be found unchanged the language, customs, folk-lore, and the traditions of this singular people, who, though but a handful, have made their mark on history. "The Magyar shall never perish out of the world" is a saying amongst them. It is a striking fact that in no part of Europe is there a stronger feeling evinced for territorial possession than in Hungary. The Hungarian peasant holds to the land

as a part and parcel of himself. "Land is perpetual man," says the old Irish law. A similar notion is latent in Hungarian patriotism, especially in the case of the peasant; for he believes in the land with something of the old pagan worship. It was owing to this intense feeling for home, and for their own little plot of ground, that brought about some of the most touching scenes in the terrible catastrophe which I am about to describe. Nor is this feeling for the soil merely sentimental; as a matter of fact, nearly a third of the land in the kingdom of Hungary is in the possession of peasant-holders. It is worthy of remark that the purchase of land is much facilitated for small buyers by the advanced state of the land-laws in Hungary. The transfer of land is easy and inexpensive, and the registration of titles to estates has completely obtained in this country.

In Prince Bismarck's recently published 'Letters,' he describes travelling some twenty years ago from Vienna to Buda-Pesth, and expresses his surprise at not falling in with a single Englishman: he adds that the English, he believes, have not yet found out Hungary. During the two decades which have passed, we have, it is true, become more familiar with the country of the Magyars; but even now the ordinary traveller has little more knowledge of Hungary than he can gain in a brief sojourn at the capital, for he rarely penetrates into the interior. It is for this reason I have given this slight sketch of the dwellers in the Theiss valley, who, like their neighbours the Transylvanians, may be said to inhabit an odd corner of Europe.

Though I knew many parts of the great plain pretty well, I had myself never visited Szegedin. I

had passed it more than once in the railway ; but I really knew nothing of the place beyond the fact that it was considered the second city in the kingdom ; and further, that the inhabitants bore an excellent character for thrift, industry, and love of progress. On this particular morning, when travelling towards the doomed city, I was glad to seek information from my companions, and I learned that the town contained over 70,000 inhabitants. The special industries of Szegedin, I was told, were in connection with soap, mats, shoes, *paprika*, and rope-making. The flour-mills had been doing very well : one flour company of Szegedin had been paying over 20 per cent to its shareholders for some years past. My informant mentioned that the last time he had been at the place was in the autumn of 1876, when there was a very interesting exhibition of natural productions and manufactured articles. It was one of those smaller shows, which in their local way have honourably followed the example set by the International Expositions. My friend went on to say that the people of Szegedin were most energetic about all educational matters. The largest building in the town is the schoolhouse—a good sign always. I saw it later, an imposing structure of four storeys, the highest in the whole place ; and, as it turned out, it was a very ark of refuge for the poor drowning people, saving hundreds of lives.

Szegedin, it seems, is not without some historical associations. In the dreary time when the Turks had possession of a great part of Hungary, and threw civilisation back at least three centuries, they established themselves strongly at Szegedin. They built there a considerable fort, which is a feature in the present town. The encroachment of the Theiss is shown by the

fact that one of the Turkish towers is now completely surrounded by water. The Romans, too, probably had a colony on the same site, for a great quantity of Roman remains have been found in the immediate vicinity.

The inhabitants of Szegedin are principally Magyars, but no part of Hungary is free from admixture of other races ; and there is a large infusion of Servs, Slavs, Germans, and Jews. I learnt subsequently that the numbers in the town had been increased within the last week by not less than 10,000 souls. The inhabitants of the drowned villages and outlying hamlets had come into the town for shelter.

My friend mentioned that his father, who had taken part in the war of Hungarian independence, had spent six weeks at Szegedin in 1849, when the Revolutionary Government retreated from Buda-Pesth and made this place the seat of the National Assembly. General Perczel, with 60,000 men, was stationed here, but there was no question of making a stand at Szegedin. These were the closing scenes of that noble struggle—the day of Világos was nigh at hand, the saddest scene in all the long tragedy of Hungarian history.

But no more conversation or reminiscences now, for the train has arrived at the station of Félégyháza, and we are all up and stirring. At this place we found a special train waiting to convey ourselves and our baggage down to the point of the railway where the lines ran into the water, some four miles further on. On leaving Félégyháza the floods were on both sides of the railway embankment, and we soon came to the spot where the train could go no further—in fact the wheels of the locomotive were already in water. It was “Water, water everywhere” — it

might have been the old prehistoric sea that we looked upon, stretching away far as the eye could reach. In less than half an hour everything was ready, the boats were afloat, and we were prepared to start. It was a curious sight: our train, consisting of an engine with half-a-dozen trucks, had been run out on the already submerged strip of earth, and stood reflected in the water; the long line of telegraph-poles marking the track of railway towards Szegedin becoming less and less distinct. As the crow flies the town stood some six miles off; but it resembled a mirage rising from the lake, rather than the solid reality that it then was. Before we finally got off, a good breeze arose, and our boats, moored to the embankment, were bumped about pretty freely by the waves. Having manned seven of the boats with two men each, we thought first of proceeding direct to Szegedin, but after a short consultation we determined to visit several of the inundated villages to see if we could afford any assistance. Accordingly we rowed off in procession towards a small village which we noticed to our left, just visible above the waste of waters. On approaching we found it was entirely at the mercy of wind and waves; the ruined houses were breaking up visibly before us, the rough wind helping the destruction. The surface of the flood was covered with remains of roofs, floors, and rafters. We rowed round about with necessary caution, and at last with some difficulty managed to enter what must have been the principal street of the village. We passed by this water-way between two lines of ruin. Here and there were portions of buildings which had withstood the flood more bravely than the others; here the gable-end of a cottage with its chimney-stack, and

there, higher than the rest, there remained the section of a house, standing up as it were a witness against the cruel flood. The waves were beating at its basement, but above in the little upper storey were seen pots and pans still hanging on hooks on the wall. I noticed also some pictures of saints, and a portrait of poor Batthiany, who met his cruel death at the hands of the Austrians in 1849. His portrait, by the way, may be found in nearly every Hungarian hovel.

After giving a sharp look-out for any poor soul in need of help, amidst the tufts of ruin or floating *débris*, we came to the conclusion, or at least we hoped, that the villagers had saved themselves by timely flight; for there were no living things to be seen, except two or three cats, and a good many fowls, on the open rafters which still spanned the waters. I counted more than a dozen guinea-fowl on a hay-rick, which, strange to say, had resisted the waves. Even during our short tour of inspection, the wind had driven such a mass of wreckage across the way we had come, that it was difficult to steer back through the floating heaps of furniture, doors, window-frames, and rafters, the latter sticking up here and there like dangerous snags. Far and near the surface of the water was covered with hay, straw, and the stalks of Indian corn; utter havoc everywhere.

After leaving this village, we turned our boats in the opposite direction. Crossing the railway embankment, we made for the town of Dorozsma, which we knew was submerged. This was a place of nearly 10,000 inhabitants. We rowed for more than an hour before we reached the vicinity of the town, but we were completely baffled in our attempts to approach nearer: a long dike, now covered by a few inches

of water, barred our entrance. This dike, we learned afterwards, had been erected by the inhabitants during the previous week, in order to keep back the encroaching flood; but two days before our visit, the waters had mastered their defence, and poured over the barrier. After running aground several times on this mud-bank, we gave up all attempts to get closer to a group of houses that were still standing, and made straight for Szegedin.

We had got out of our course, so we had still a good hour's pull before we could reach our destination. We were in much doubt and anxiety as to the state in which we should find the town, for the waters were pervading and increasing everywhere. After we had recrossed the submerged railway, we perceived in the distance a long black line trending away to the left, which had somewhat the appearance of a great sea-snake stretched out on the waters. It soon, however, became apparent to us that this was a dike—in short, the last rampart of defence for unhappy Szegedin—against the devouring flood. In the background, or rather I should say in the rear of the dike, were visible the spires and roofs of a large town. At last, after rowing through an immense amount of floating *débris*, which impeded our progress at every moment, we arrived at the long black strip of earth, and found it crowded with thousands of people in a state of unresting activity. Men, women, and children were busied bringing up earth, as fast as hands and feet could work. We moored our boats to the long white piles that had been driven in to strengthen the embankment, and stepped ashore with the utmost care, in order not to displace the loose earth on that weak and frail construction. On landing, we found to our astonishment that the fall on the inner

side of the dike was from fifteen to twenty feet; and the greater part of Szegedin itself was standing on a level as low, or nearly so. The situation of affairs was simply appalling! My first thought was the utter hopelessness of keeping back such a sea of waters by this narrow strip of earth. The wind had been steadily rising since the morning, and the waves were already beginning to beat with considerable force against the outside of the dike: the flood, I must observe, was already five feet above the original level of the railway embankment. The defence that the inhabitants of Szegedin were now making was, in reality, a second dike, raised on the substructure of the railway, extending about four miles in length. It was touching in the extreme to see these hundreds of busy workers; such a motley group as are not often found side by side,—master and servant, the well-dressed citizen, the scantily-clothed Slav, the poor women, and even the little children—all plying to and fro with their burdens. The men wheeling loaded barrows up the steep incline, the women struggling up with their market-baskets filled with earth; the strong, the weak, all alike bent on the one object—this struggle for dear life against those whelming waters. It wanted but a few inches, and the overmastering flood would have its way; still the poor people were not without hope. For twenty-four hours the water had not risen: this was a good sign, and the brave multitude took heart of grace, and hour after hour, day and night, the steady work went on. I was greatly impressed by the quietness and order which was maintained throughout; a state of things which reflects infinite credit on the townspeople generally.

It is true that Szegedin was really in a state of siege, and the

inhabitants under martial law. A few days previous to our arrival, the danger of inundation had become so obvious, that General Pulz, the commander of the troops stationed in the town, numbering about two thousand, had issued orders that all the inhabitants were liable to be called out to work on the dike; and the orders were to be obeyed on pain of death. Companies of soldiers went out from time to time and marshalled the townspeople in batches of one hundred and fifty each, bringing whatever available implements they might have with them. When they arrived at the dike, they were set to work at once on a certain section, where they remained for six hours at a stretch. When the time of duty was over, they received tickets from the commanding officer, stating that they had done the work required; they were then permitted to return home, and were not liable for service again for another twenty-four hours. This had gone on for some days before our arrival. I noticed that some six thousand people were thus engaged the evening when I first saw the place. I walked nearly two miles along the dike on this occasion. Everywhere the same scene met my eyes: the turbulent waters washing against the long row of white piles—the poor people working and toiling. Earnestly, almost silently, the steady work went on, as if they had been part of a trained and disciplined army. I may here remark, to the honour and credit of the people, that in the subsequent disaster, only ten arrests were made at Szegedin during several days.

I must here pause to explain that the flood-water, extending over hundreds of square miles, was some three feet above the level of the river Theiss. The dike keeping back this vast mass of water was

in the rear of the town, the Theiss being on the other side. As yet the flood-waters had no direct communication with the river. The reason of this is as follows: The Theiss is hemmed in, higher up the stream, by high embankments on both sides. This regulation of the river I shall enlarge upon further on—we are now simply occupied with the bare facts. It was the bursting of one of these embankments on the Szegedin side of the river, about twenty miles further up stream, that first placed the town in danger; the waters thus pouring down upon the lower level, burst a second dam, situated eight miles above the town. An immense area of country was thereby flooded in an incredibly short space of time, and the irresistible waters now poured on and on, till they reached the opposing dike, which was Szegedin's last hope. The gravity of the position was only too evident. I turned from the busy scene on the dike with a heart-sinking sense of despair. Leaving our boats and their contents under the charge of an officer, we hastened into the town to report our arrival to the burghermaster. We directed our steps to the town-hall, a building of some architectural importance. A tower springs from its centre, which probably looked down upon the Turks during their occupation of the place. On entering, we were ushered into a fine old room of considerable dimensions; on the walls, and ranged under the black-raftered ceiling, were hung a number of silk flags, the ancient insignia of the city's power and dignity. Here Kossuth uttered his last address to the National Assembly in 1849, and now, after a lapse of thirty years, the aged patriot speaks again to the townspeople, though from afar. He says in his recent letter of sympathy to the Emperor—which,

by the way, buries the party ran-cour of a lifetime—"Szegedin must live; Szegedin must not be lost."

But I anticipate. At present the aspect of this lofty council-chamber is sad and troubled enough. The carved tables and the high-backed chairs, which were wont to seat the worshipful burghers, have been pushed away, huddled together without care, to make room for rows of mattresses for the fugitives who had come in from the neighbouring villages.

We received a hearty welcome from the burghermaster, more especially as one of our number, M. Gerster, is a director of the Francis Canal Towage Company, and he was no stranger in the town. It was by his orders that the steam-tug *Czongrad* had been sent to Szegedin to await our arrival. M. Gerster placed the steamer at the disposal of the authorities; and it was after some consultation with them that we agreed to make an expedition the following morning up the Theiss to render help to a party of four hundred workmen, who were believed to be isolated by the waters, and in danger of their lives. This plan of course depended on all going on well through the night.

After the interview with the authorities at the *Város-ház*, I walked about the town for a couple of hours to take note of the situation. In the lower parts, the people were much occupied in plastering up the house doors, or even building them in with mud and bricks. This was perfectly useless; for when the water was once in the town, it was forced up through the drains, and frequently filled the houses from inside, and burst outwards from the pressure of water. In looking about, I was very much surprised to see only three pontoons and two or three boats ready in case of emergency in

the streets. I believe there were others at the railway station, but certainly I saw only these scanty preparations in the town itself. Before turning into my quarters for the night, I walked out once more to the dike. It was a very picturesque sight: hundreds of flaring torches and camp-fires lit up the edge of the black waters; the whole surface of the flood was restless and agitated, the waves beating visibly against the long line of defence. I left the scene with anxious forebodings, fearing what might happen in the night—for the storm was getting worse, and the wind blew right on the embankment.

On awaking by daybreak the next morning, it was an intense relief to find that the storm had somewhat abated; and further, it was satisfactory to know that there had been no rise whatever in the water during this anxious night. After a hasty breakfast, we made our way to the river-side, and joined our good friend, Captain Hadszy of the *Czongrad*, who had already "steam up" and everything prepared for our expedition.

Shortly after leaving the town, we steamed into a wide expanse of water, no land visible except the river dike on our left: this had been cut some way further up to allow the flood waters—which, as I have before explained, were higher than the river level—to escape into the river, and lessen the danger that threatened Szegedin. This cutting, about a hundred yards in length, produced so strong a current of influx water, that we could hardly make way against it. It must be evident that, had the river level only been, say, a couple of feet lower, the relief to the flooded district would have been immense. Unfortunately, at its debouchure, the Theiss has a sand-bar which retards its outflow into the Danube. It is necessary to

note this fact for further consideration. Passing on our way, we came to the unfortunate village of Tapé, likewise on our left side. This place had over two thousand inhabitants, and was renowned for its flourishing industries. It had been completely submerged. It was simply an obliterated ruin; nothing but the church was now standing. The river embankment in front of the village was high, and from sixty to eighty feet broad. Here were collected a number of the inhabitants—several hundred souls; and there were a good many besides in some barges moored to the dike further down. The poor creatures on the dike were encamped with such of their household goods as they had been able to save. The scene was piteous in the extreme. Every inch of this perilous ridge was occupied; some people were even standing half in the water. There were weeping mothers with babes at the breast; children of all ages sobbing aloud; sick people placed carefully on tables to be above the reach of the waters; and all sorts of goods and chattels stacked in heaps, the last remnants of many a happy home. The barges I have alluded to were mostly full of the aged and sick: they held up their hands in gestures of despair. These poor creatures had been subsisting for days on stale bread and Indian corn. We took them all the fresh food we could possibly spare from the steamer; but we could not have taken a tithe of them on board, even had not our duty obliged us to go to the rescue of others in more urgent need.

We pursued our course up the river, and met with the same sad sight as far as the eye could reach—an islet of ruin here and there marking the site of what was once a village or hamlet. I remarked a large building sticking out of the

waters, many miles to the left. This turned out to be the castle of Count Pallavicini, who owns 170,000 acres along the Theiss valley.

It was far on in the afternoon before we reached the island where the workmen had taken refuge. They were in extreme danger, for the ground was melting away visibly from under them. We had not come a moment too soon. They were huddled up together with their spades and wheelbarrows, strong, stalwart men, but powerless as infants against the all-pervading flood. Poor fellows, their faces were lit up with joy when they saw us come to rescue them. We anchored as near as possible, and commenced taking them off as fast as we could with our one boat. It took some while longer than I should have thought, and the setting sun warned us there was no time to be lost. The sun went down in great beauty, dipping into the cruel waters, and throwing back an effulgent glow that lit up that scene of desolation with a terrible loveliness. When the great red ball had sunk beneath the sea of trouble, and the last hues of exquisite colouring had faded from wave and sky, I felt somehow that hope itself had departed to the underworld. The wind now rose again, whistling drearily, and in the chill, grey twilight we made our way back with all speed to Szegedin.

It was quite dark when we reached the town: nothing remarkable had transpired in our absence. The state of affairs remained much the same as in the morning, neither better nor worse.

As we had got back rather late, it was after ten o'clock before we had finished our supper at the restaurant in the town. Every time the outer door was opened, a gust of wind shook the whole house—the storm was rising again worse

than last night. The misery we had seen that day made us all very silent and thoughtful. The outlook for the night, with that dismal howling close to our ears, was not comforting. Would it be possible to keep back the flood yet another twelve hours, or at least till daylight dawned?

For a few seconds at a time there would be perfect stillness, then the wind came down the street with a rush and a roar that made one start. Each blast that blew was fiercer than the previous one, and the wind came with fatal precision from the very point most dangerous to the safety of our last ramparts.

Some officers, who had been on the dike all day, were seated at our table. We had spoken a few words together, but they could not tell us anything more than we all knew. Suddenly the door was thrown open—a soldier, breathless with running, entered, and, saluting his officer, cried out, "All is over, the waters are coming."

We rushed into the street, on towards the town-hall, but the excitement was so great, that it was impossible to push through the crowd and effect an entrance. A company of soldiers were guarding the door, trying in vain to keep the people back. Numbers were flying from the lower part of the town, some trying to drag their household goods with them, others terror-stricken seemed only to think where they might be safe, crowding where there was a crowd.

Finding it was not possible to get into the town-hall, I thought I would see what was really happening at the dike; and with this view, I turned towards the long street that leads to the *alföld* railway. The wind blew with such blinding force up the street that I had great difficulty in making my way against it.

When I had got half-way, I met an officer, whom I knew, coming straight from the dike. He told me immediately that it was a false alarm, and that, up to that moment, the rampart was intact, but how long it could be maintained in the teeth of such a storm he knew not. As it was, the waters splashed over in some places from the force of the wind, and the torches were blown out; so the soldiers and others had to work in darkness.

I walked back towards the town. People were rushing about in every direction, and cries and lamentations mingled with the whistling and howling of the storm: it was a regular panic. The authorities had much difficulty in calming the people, and in making them believe that the report of the breaking of the dike was a false alarm.

It was nearly midnight, when I threw myself, without undressing, on a sofa in my room at the hotel. I must have dropped off to sleep at once, for I was not conscious of anything till I found myself awakened by the tolling of a loud bell. I started up, and then the warning sound of three successive cannon-shots gave the signal of distress. I struck a light, and just made out that it was three o'clock, when the candle was blown out by the draught, the window-frame rattled and shook again; so I knew directly that the wind had not gone down. I got on my overcoat, and was making my way out of the hotel, when the gas went out, and the whole town was in utter darkness. Hurrying into the street, I found it filled with people, flying in the direction of the river embankment, which was known to be high and strong. By this time the storm had increased to a perfect hurricane, adding much to the general bewilderment, for the torches were perpetually blown out. The townsfolk seemed as un-

prepared and panic-stricken as if the catastrophe had not stared them in the face for days.

Throughout the town the church bells were tolling the knell of the doomed city; but one could only hear the dismal warning now and then when there was a lull in the shrieking storm. I was told that, in one quarter of the town, the signals of distress were never heard at all, owing to the noise and fury of the wind. The darkness—the uncertainty as to where the danger was greatest—the unreasoning struggles of the people—all added to the dire confusion of this awful night. I had been running in the direction of the town-hall, but had not gone far when I was met by the oncoming waters. I was knee-deep in the flood at once; and not daring to go on, I turned and fled with all speed in the direction of the river dike. It was well for me that I had not lost my bearings. I knew that if I could gain the river-dike I should be all right; for I could communicate with my friends on board the steamer. Reaching the embankment, I found it so crowded that there was barely standing-room. I was able to grope my way to the steamer, and when on board I found that the captain, M. Gerster, and several of the volunteers, had at once started with boats on a life-saving expedition. There was already water enough in the town to float the boats.

The day never dawned upon a sadder scene than that which met our eyes when the light revealed to us in its full extent the calamity that had overtaken the city. Houses were falling in every direction,—the rising waters seemed to saw the foundations from under them; and they melted away in the flood, or toppled over with a crash. When it was sufficiently light, I set off for the telegraph office to report events

to London. Fortunately the telegraphic wires were in working order; indeed through the whole week there was only one day of interruption, thanks to the energy of the officials. The office is situated rather higher than most of the town, and when I entered, the flood had not yet reached this level. I went to an upper room to write my telegram, which occupied some time, owing to irregularities caused by the general confusion of everything. When I came down-stairs, with the intention of finding my way back to the steamer, I discovered that the flood had overtaken me, even in that short time, and there was already a depth of three feet of water in the street. I saw clearly that there was no time to be lost, so I plunged in; but just at that moment a country cart passed the door,—the poor horses were doing their best to keep their noses out of the water. I hailed the driver, and offering him a good “backsheesh,” got him to transport me to the Hotel Hungaria, which, together with some half-dozen neighbouring houses, occupied the only dry spot in the whole town. I found every room and passage of the inn crowded with fugitives. From thence I made my way again to the river embankment, which was but two hundred yards from the hotel. Reaching the spot where the Czongrad was moored, I found that my gallant friends had already been doing good work. The captain and his little band had been backwards and forwards into the town taking off the unfortunate people from dangerous places that were cut off by the waters. Men, women, and children were snatched from crumbling houses, from trees, and even from lamp-posts, to which they had clung in their desperation. Through the day boatful after boatful was brought in safety to the

steamer, till the deck was crowded with the fugitives, and amongst them seven children died after being received on board. From want of room the bodies of the poor little ones had to be laid out in the stoke-hole; for even the engine-room was crowded with our living freight. I spoke with one poor woman there, who had had six children. Five were drowned before her eyes; the youngest had now died in her arms from the effects of exposure. The sights we encountered were most heart-rending.

In rowing in and about the town on our mission of rescue, I saw terrible scenes, and all the more terrible because, in some cases, it was impossible to afford timely succour. In one particular instance, I remarked a good-sized house,—the inmates had gathered on the roof, and in the windows of the loft women were seen holding out their infants and imploring aid. Before a boat could be brought to the spot the whole building collapsed with a dreadful crash, a cloud of dust rose in the air, and then all was over—the house and its inmates had disappeared in the surging flood. Whole streets were laid in ruins; the place knows them no more. In the space of two minutes I saw six houses dissolve away in the flood. I do not know whether there were any people still in them. I fear that in this large city of 70,000, indeed we may say 80,000 inhabitants, there must have been many sick and aged who were unhappily overlooked in the dreadful misery and confusion of the time. It is necessary to remark that by far the greater part of the houses at Szegedin was built of sun-dried bricks, having the roofs tiled with shingle. Good foundations even were wanting; for there is no stone in the great plain, and the people build with the materials nearest at hand and

cheapest. This will account for the rapid destruction of the dwellings in the poorer parts of the town. The task of rescue was also rendered more difficult in consequence; for when the walls of a house caved in, it frequently happened that the timbers of the arched roof broke away outwards, striking whatever chanced to be near with great force. Our boat's crew had several very narrow escapes,—in fact the volunteers did not get off altogether unscathed.

As night came on, the whole scene was lit up by a great fire raging at the match-manufactory. The effect was truly awful. By the light of the flames we visited the embankment. There must have been upwards of 40,000 people collected there, in a state of the greatest misery—in short, without food, and without covering save their own garments. In some places fires had been lighted with wood snatched from the floating *débris*, and shivering groups of poor creatures were gathered round. Such a scene of desolation, taken all in all, has perhaps never been equalled. The distress was greatly aggravated by the pitiless snow and sleet which swept over the homeless sufferers. During the night ten degrees of frost were registered—a most unusual thing at this season. I have before alluded to the strong attachment of the Hungarian peasant for home and familiar surroundings. It is a curious fact that, weeks after the inundation of Szegedin, the people could not be persuaded to leave their miserable bivouac on the river embankment. It was the spot of dry earth nearest to their drowned homes; and there, poor creatures, they stop, patiently waiting the assuaging of the waters. In some instances the people preferred to perish with their crumbling houses, rather than save themselves or be saved by others. They had lost all

that was dear to them, and they had nothing left to live for.

On the day following the one of the final disaster, I think the general depression was greater than on the day itself. The extent of the incalculable losses, the misery to thousands incurred thereby, were more fully realised. It is useless recapitulating scene after scene of trouble and distress. I might mention cases of mothers frozen to death with infants at the breast; of women paralysed with terror, giving premature birth to their unhappy offspring (a case of this kind took place on board the ship Czongrad); but I prefer to pass on from the inevitable misery of the situation, to remark on the inadequate amount of help provided against the emergency, which was certainly *not unforeseen*. One or two episodes that came under my own observation may serve to make this clear. In rowing through the town during the second day, we passed a church in the suburbs crammed full of people. They called to us piteously for help; they had no food of any description, but we could not perform a miracle and feed the multitude. Their lives were not in danger, for the building was of stone, and most reluctantly we went on our way. But I grieve to say it was the third day before bread was brought to these people.

All through there was a scarcity of boats. And when ten thousand loaves one day, and fifteen thousand another, arrived from Budapesth, the means of distributing the food was very inadequate, owing simply to there not being enough boats. There was gross neglect somewhere, and such neglect in face of this dreadful disaster fixes a heavy responsibility on those concerned. I have stated earlier in my narrative that very little provision had been made beforehand, in

respect to pontoons and boats. I must remark that the officers and men of the regular army cannot be too much praised for their unwearied exertions in saving life and property by night and by day. The pontoon service, according to my humble judgment, was less well managed.

There is much diversity of opinion about the number of deaths caused by the disaster at Szegedin. The central authorities state that the bodies recovered up to about the third week in April, did not reach one hundred. As an eyewitness of the disaster, and remaining after it took place five days on the spot, I can myself entertain no doubt that many more than this number were drowned in the confusion of that dreadful night; and it was the opinion of some of the high military officials that the victims must be counted by thousands. Before the waters have been thoroughly drained off, and the wreckage cleared away, it is vain making any computation one way or another. The houses were crushed in by hundreds, many of them falling in such a manner that the roofs came down intact, thereby holding down any bodies that might be beneath.

The official statements that I have as yet seen do not give any account of the mortality amongst the villages and outlying hamlets. I fear there must have been great loss of human life in the submerged districts, which were hundreds of square miles in extent. As a rule, the only boats to be found in the villages were of a very primitive kind—a sort of “dug-out”—being formed of the trunk of a large tree, scooped out, and capable of holding three people at the most. One can only imagine too well that many lonely farm-houses, and even villages, were surprised by the flood, and that their inmates found no

means of escape across fields and roads suddenly submerged to the depth of several feet. In the whole district under water, the population was computed to be not much under 120,000 souls: practically the greater number have been rendered homeless. At Szegedin some 1500 people sought shelter in the handsome school-house—which, being a solid stone structure, defied the waters. It will be evident that even in the towns, places of refuge were difficult to be found, for the official returns state that out of “the 6566 houses in Szegedin, only 331 remain, and many are not habitable.”

A great flood is indeed one of the most terrible of all disasters. It is true, a fire leaves only the charred embers of a homestead or a town, but when it has burnt out the active mischief is at an end; a hurricane may sweep all before it, but when past, a calm succeeds. In the case of inundation, however, the trouble only passes away with despairing slowness. Months must elapse before the waters are drained off, even with the best aid of steam-pumping arrangements. In the submerged district there can be no harvest this year. It will be well if the rich fields and pastures are not covered with sand and gravel for many a long year to come. It is impossible to arrive at any estimate at present of the loss incurred by the agriculturist. The fields belonging to Szegedin alone are said to comprise an area of 315 square miles. When the Emperor visited the scene of the calamity, the mayor addressed him, saying: “Your Majesty, we have lost all our fields, our goods, our houses,—all we have is destroyed.” The havoc is indeed terrible, but it must be hoped that the “fields” may not be utterly lost; the injury depends very much

on whether the irruption of the waters was violent or otherwise.

This question brings us to a consideration of the causes which induced the overflow of the Theiss. Before doing so, however, I will give a brief extract from the official report of his Excellency Count Karolyi to the Lord Mayor of London. “The two communities of Algyo and Tapé,” says the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador, “have had their whole territory overrun by water. In Tapé 477 houses fell, in Algyo 425 houses; the inhabitants; to the number of nearly six thousand at the latter place, left, abandoning all their property. 8014 acres of land in Tapé, and 2243 acres in Algyo, are flooded. The community of Dorozsma had 1820 houses, with 9688 inhabitants, 32,359 acres of land. Only 300 houses remained standing; the rest, with all provisions and stores, and the largest part of the fortune of the inhabitants, was destroyed and buried under water.” The statistics of the destruction of houses at Szegedin have been already given. Nor does the Theiss district alone suffer, the Körös and the Berettyo rivers had also flooded hundreds of miles of country before their waters reached the Theiss. In short, the inundations in Hungary this year have exceeded in extent anything of the kind which has occurred during the present century. In a lesser degree, the trouble has not been infrequent in past times; and a certain amount of flooding of pasture-lands by the river’s side is annual and innocuous, if not directly beneficial.

In considering the behaviour of the river, we must look to its origin. The Theiss rises, as we are aware, in the Marmoros mountains, a portion of the north-eastern range of the Carpathians, passing through some of the finest forest and rock scenery

in Europe, with the rapidity of a true mountain torrent; it then flows near Tokay into the level plain, and becomes the most sluggish of known rivers. Reaching Szegedin, it receives, in the Maros river, the tributary waters of a great part of Transylvania, and finally flows into the Danube, twenty miles east of Peterwardein.

Just when the Theiss becomes slow, it becomes mischievous and troublesome. As long ago as the reign of Maria Theresa efforts were made to cure its irregularities. But it was under the auspices of Count Szécheneyi in 1846, that the work of regulating the Theiss was seriously commenced. The system gone upon was firstly to endeavour to straighten the course of the meandering stream, whose turns and twists may be compared to the wriggling of a snake, or endless repetitions of the letter S: the windings alone spread over 611 kilometres. Canals were cut from one bend to another—108 canals in all—which reduced the windings by no less than 480 kilometres. These operations have spread over a number of years, but it has been seen fit to discontinue the works for the last two or three years. It must be borne in mind that the regulation was commenced at the upper reaches of the river—that is, shortly after its entrance on the plain. Now the canals that were cut were not so deep, and not nearly so wide, as the original bed of the stream; but the current being led off to the shortest cut, the result is that in summer the old bed is nearly dry, and as the greater flow of water brings down an immense increase of detritus, these channels get more and more filled up. The canals, however, are not of sufficient size to keep in flood-waters in the spring time, and to remedy this difficulty, strong dikes have

been constructed at enormous expense along both banks of the river. These dikes are built right up against the summer or low-water mark; the consequence is, that when the river rises there is actually no room for the water, and the dikes are over-flooded in a manner much more dangerous than was the former quiet overflow. The waters at times of great rainfall burst through the dikes with tremendous force, and *instantly* flood immense tracts of country, carrying everything before them. Formerly the waters flowed gradually over the land, and as the river-level fell so the flood-waters receded, generally in time for the farmer to sow his seed. Now the case is quite different: when the water once breaks through the dikes, it flows all over the country, perhaps many miles down, in a parallel direction to the river; and as not unfrequently happens, the dikes lower down remain firm, and the flood-water rises two or three feet above the river-level. This state of things naturally increases the danger tenfold, and was exactly what took place at Szegedin, which, as we know, was drowned—not by the river itself, but—by the accumulated flood-water behind the town. The calamity has been foreseen by engineers of eminence, who have not failed to speak out on the subject. Amongst the opponents of the present system of the Theiss regulation is Major Stephanovich: he made a statement five years ago, before the Geographical Society's meeting at Vienna, to the effect that it was his opinion that "Szegedin would some day be broken through by the Theiss."

In 1865 the inspector of river regulation, M. Carl Hevigh, drew attention to the danger. He said, "If we admit the possibility that some time or other the Theiss at

its highest may meet the Maros at its highest, then one of the most populated, industrious, flourishing cities of Hungary will be exposed to dangers and catastrophes which those only can understand who know how low three-fourths of the city lie, and from what material the pretty houses of Szegedin are built."

The Maros flows at right angles into the Theiss at Szegedin, and when at flood arrests the current of the other river, pushing it back, and thereby greatly increasing the risk of inundation. It was in view of this danger that the great Italian engineer Paleocapa suggested that a canal should be constructed which should direct the Maros into the Theiss much lower down, thereby avoiding the dangerous confluence at Szegedin. This was in the year 1846, when the abolition of serfdom and other sweeping reforms were agitating Hungary, and possibly economic projects got shelved; or perhaps Szegedin did not wish to turn a navigable river from her doors. Be it as it may, nothing was done to forward so commendable a scheme. The proposal of securing Szegedin by the much-talked-of "ring-dike" is considered "utterly futile" by Major Stephanovich, on account of the subterranean water.

It has recently been proposed by Messrs Stephanovich and Hobohm to make a canal in the ancient course of the Theiss, at the base of the Transylvanian Mountains, which should receive the Szamos, Körös, and Maros, and subsequently enter the Danube at Karas, between the dunes of Deliblat and the commencement of the defile of Basias. This system of canalisation would have the double object of averting floods and of directing water for purposes of irrigation into dry districts.

According to received opinion, the

geological study of Hungary shows, that at an epoch relatively recent the Theiss ran something like a hundred kilometres to the east of its present bed, following the base of the Transylvanian Alps. But in course of time the Szamos, the three Körös rivers, and the Maros, all coming in from the east, worked together to throw the Theiss westward, and the towns on the western bank, notably Szegedin and Csongrad, are obliged to retire from time to time before the devouring current. There are certain local exceptions to the westerly tendency of the Theiss, such as that caused by the impulsion of the Danubian waters, which have had the contrary effect, throwing that portion of the river in an easterly direction, as the following fact will prove. In the time of Trajan and Diocletian, the Romans established fortifications against the Dacians on the plain of Titel, which was then on the east of the Theiss; the plain is now found on the west side of the river. Notwithstanding local differences, we must accept the fact that the general displacement of the Theiss towards a westerly direction is constant and uniform. This is seen not only in irruptive floods of a violent character, as the inundations of this year, but the lands to the west of this river are subject to the almost more serious evil of the oozing and leakage of subterranean waters, which, for lack of channels to carry them off, remain a long while, to the great detriment of the farmer.

To lessen this plague of waters has been the object of the Theiss regulation works for nearly half-a-century; and it must be conceded that near upon four million acres of fever-breeding, stagnant marsh have been actually recovered. Unfortunately, this result, great as it is, has not been an unmitigated blessing;

for the more the people of the upper Theiss drain and embank their lands, the more the dwellers in the lower Theiss valley have to dread the recurrence of disaster. "Les récentes inondations ont envahi des territoires, dits 'de collines,' que n'atteignaient jamais les anciennes crues. . . . Quels que soient donc, aux yeux des ingénieurs, les mérites d'exécution présentés par les travaux d'endiguement de la Theiss, la contrée tout entière y a plus perdu que gagné."*

"A great river will have its way," observed a distinguished geologist in speaking of the recent floods; certainly we may take it as an axiom that you must not interfere with Nature without bringing her into your councils. It would surely assist, without thwarting, the operations of Nature, if care was taken to preserve the *incline* of the Theiss by dredging—if the bar at the river's mouth were removed—and if the combined Hungarian waters were given a readier outfall at the Iron Gates. Before enlarging on the various "cures" for the evil, there is something to be said about prevention.

In the economy of nature, forests play an important part in regulating the rainfall of a country; and it is well known that the destruction of forests has a most injurious effect on climate. Professor Ramsay, in writing on the inundations of the river Po in 1872, says: "Not only do wide-spreading forests tend to produce a moist atmosphere, but their shade prevents rapid evaporation, and the roots of the trees hinder the quick flow of the surface-water in the streams of the wood-covered area. . . . But by foresight and skill much may be done; and if the great old forests of the moun-

tains were allowed to reassert themselves, the recurring danger would be in time less than now. But to be even nearly safe, dredging must, if possible, be added to embanking, so as to keep the long incline of the river-bottom at an average level, otherwise the time in the far future *must* come when Nature will of necessity overcome even the best-directed efforts of man."

The destruction of forests has been a crying evil in Hungary for many years past. M. Keleti, in his report "On the State of Agriculture in Hungary," presented to the International Congress at Paris in 1878, says, in speaking of certain districts, that they would still be fertile if the inexcusable imprudence of cutting down forests had not been committed—"an irrational proceeding," he adds, "which has exposed some parts of the land to the risk of being carried away by the waters."

Every traveller in Hungary who has recorded his impressions, has loudly proclaimed against the ruthless waste of the forests. Paget, Boner, and more recently Crosse, have one and all dwelt largely on this important subject. Mr Boner says: "The Wallachs find it too much trouble to fell the trees they destroy systematically: one year the bark is stripped off, the wood dries, and the year after it is fired. . . . In 1862, near Toplitz, 23,000 *joch* of forests were burned by the peasantry. If this goes on, a time will come when the dearth of wood will make itself felt."

Travelling in Hungary in 1876, Mr Crosse says: "It is impossible to travel twenty miles in the Carpathians without encountering the terrible ravages committed by the lawless Wallachs on the beautiful woods that adorn the sides of the

* Géographie. L'Europe Centrale, par M. Reclus. Paris, 1878. Part iii., p. 316.

mountains. . . . The great proportion of the forest land belongs to the State, hence the supervision is less keen, and the depredations more readily winked at."

While wringing our hands over the floods, it may sound almost paradoxical to say that Hungary's greatest trouble is *want of water*; and here again is proof that the normal condition of the rainfall should not be disturbed by unduly interfering with the forests. "Drought is the great enemy of agriculture in Hungary," says M. Keleti. The rich soil of the great plain, which yields such marvellous crops of wheat, hemp, colza, Indian corn, tobacco, and rice in ordinary seasons, is subject occasionally to such terrible drought, that the harvest disappears under one's feet. In 1863 there was a dry season, which caused a loss to the country of 126 millions of florins, and reduced the cattle stock to such a degree that it has not yet recovered. Some other causes, it is true, have helped to bring about the decrease of horned cattle, a state of things greatly deplored by all sound agriculturists; but there remains the fact of the fearful ravages committed by the dry season of 1863. It is reckoned that on an average there is one dry year in every ten.

To face this difficulty, the question of irrigation is now seriously attracting attention in Hungary. It is a work twice blessed, because it relieves the flooded seasons of their surplus waters, to store them for needful times of drought. The favourable results to be derived from irrigation in the fertile soil of Hungary almost exceed belief. In a visit of inspection through the Bács country, in Lower Hungary, last autumn, I gathered various statistics, which went to prove that the man who irrigates his land gains from 80 to 100 per cent over

his neighbour who neglects this obvious duty.

General Türr, speaking on "Canalisation and Irrigation" at Buda-Pesth, in April of last year, says: "The irrigation as used by the Bulgarian gardeners is worth notice. They are clever enough to draw out of an acre a revenue of from 400 to 500 florins. . . . A man named Szemzo, who owns land near the Francis Canal, now receives a rental of 80 to 120 florins per acre from Bulgarians, whereas formerly he received only 10 florins per acre." The Bulgarians, it must be observed, are the market-gardeners of Hungary. In the suburbs of almost every town colonies of these people have established themselves, especially where there is a river or a canal; and by the aid of a very simple mechanism of their own invention, they elevate the water, and throw it over the ground, producing thereby enormous crops of vegetables.

These economic results are apart from the special question before us. With regard to future inundations of the Hungarian rivers, I fear the "forecast" is by no means reassuring. Engineers have stated most emphatically that Buda-Pesth itself is endangered by the present system of rectifying the Danube just above and below Pesth. M. Revy, in his "Report on the Danube at Buda-Pesth," mentions that the river has in fact divided itself into branches forming the Csepel island below the capital, for "profound hydraulic reasons," affecting the "settled régime" of the river; and to cut off a branch like that of the Soroksár—which forms one arm of the Danube round this island—is to disturb the "natural equilibrium." He goes on to say, that "to change the river's former régime in this reach of its course may involve ultimate consequences that nobody can foretell.

The Danube misses her former channel of the Soroksár more and more.

. . . What else is the embankment of the Soroksár than the artificial blocking of that branch, which permanently and annually anticipates the most unfortunate event which possibly might happen once in a generation?"

M. Pulsky, in his recent pamphlet "The Crisis," has also called attention to the present system of regulation, which "fails utterly in preserving the capital from the danger of inundation, which threatens it every year."

The danger is always, or nearly always, imminent in the spring, when the ice breaks up on the Danube. Any impediment to the onward flow of the stream by the blocking of ice-drifts has the effect of increasing tenfold the chance of inundation. I will now draw attention to what happened in 1876. The following extract from Mr Crosse's work on Hungary,* in which he describes the scene, will give some idea of how narrowly Pesth escaped the fate which has befallen Szegedin:—

"There was a peculiarity in the thaw of this spring (1876) which told tremendously against us. It came westward—viz., down stream, instead of up stream, as it usually does. This state of things greatly increased the chances of flood in the middle Danube, as the descending volume of water and ice-blocks found the lower part of the river still frozen and inert. . . . It seems that at Eresi, a few miles below Buda-Pesth, where the water is shallow, the ice had formed into a compact mass for the space of six miles, and at this point the down-drifting ice-blocks got regularly stacked, rising higher and higher, till the whole vast volume of water was bayed back upon the twin cities of Buda and Pesth, the latter place being specially endangered by

its site on the edge of the great plain.

. . . The only news of the morning (25th February) was a despairing telegram from Eresi that the barrier of ice there was immovable: this meant there was no release for the pent-up waters in the ordinary course. The accumulated flood must swamp the capital, and that soon. . . . We never quitted the Corso, though this was the third night we had not taken off our clothes; it was impossible to think of rest now. The gravest anxiety was visible on the face of every soul of that vast multitude. . . . I think it must have been ten o'clock when the fortress on the Blocksberg again belched forth its terrible sound of warning. This time there were six shots fired; this was the signal of 'Pesth in danger.' . . . I heard distinctly above the murmur of voices the town clocks strike twelve. Just afterwards a man running at full speed broke through the crowd, shouting as he went, 'The water is falling!' Thank God! he spoke words of truth.

. . . It was a generally-expressed opinion that something must have happened further down the river to relieve the pent-up waters. Very shortly official news arrived, and spread like wildfire, that the Danube had made a way for itself right across the island of Csepel into the Soroksár arm of the river. . . . The Danube, in reasserting its right of way to the sea, caused a terrible calamity to the villages on the Csepel island, but thereby Hungary's capital was saved."

After the fate of Szegedin, the warning conveyed by this incident at Buda-Pesth in 1876 is surely not to be disregarded. Plans of river regulations, which, however beneficial they may be locally, are yet not conceived on general principles, or with reference to the whole river-system of the country, must be looked upon with jealous suspicion. It is a question for the engineers to decide whether the best relief for the flooded rivers of Hungary may

* Round about the Carpathians. By Andrew F. Crosse. William Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh and London: 1878.

not be obtained by deepening and generally improving the channel of the Danube at the Iron Gates. In the opinion of persons qualified to speak, it is the only efficacious means of relieving both the Theiss and the Danube. It is no new project. In the Treaty of Paris, in 1856, it was stipulated that Austria should be empowered to remove these obstacles to the free navigation of the Danube. The question was again brought forward at the Conference in London in 1871. A plan, forming the basis of operations, was drawn up by the American engineer, M'Alpin, with the assistance of Austrian and Hungarian engineers, whereby it was proposed to blast the rocks, and so form a navigable channel through the defile of Kasan. A commission sat at Orsova, and perhaps is still sitting, for the works of peace incubate but slowly. Little or nothing has been done since the time of Trajan to improve this important water-way—the natural road for the commerce of half the continent—and now we are well on in the nineteenth century! A great flood, working dire destruction, may act usefully as a stimulant to the memory.

Postscript.—Since writing the above, an interesting pamphlet, “*Ueber die Ursachen der Katastrophe von Szegedin*,” has reached my hands. It is written by Major Stephanovich, whose name I have already quoted. The opinion of this distinguished engineer is, that

the main cause of the Szegedin disaster must be attributed to the deficient channel for the outfall of the Danube waters at the Iron Gates. He asserts most emphatically that “not only the wellbeing, but the existence even of Hungary, is concerned in removing the obstructions in the defile of Plocsa and Kasan.”

In reference to the special disaster of this spring in the Theiss valley, the writer remarks that the causes may be distinctly traced back to last autumn, when there was an excessive rainfall in the countries drained by the Save and the Drave. These rivers were in a state of overflow, and the channel of the Danube below Belgrade became surcharged, and remained in this condition the whole winter; and therefore the Theiss was unable to rid itself of its superfluous waters, which were, in fact, bayed back by the Danube. January of this year found the Theiss abnormally high, instead of being at its lowest level, usual at that season. In this condition of things the early thaw, as we know, melted the Carpathian snows, and the flood-waters came down to find the river-bed already choked.

Major Stephanovich does not mention it, but I believe it is a fact that the Danube has so strong an effect on the Theiss, that high water on the Danube causes a reflux on the current of its tributary as far up as Szegedin itself, a distance of one hundred and thirty-three kilometres.

THE DEATH OF MAJOR WIGRAM BATTYE.

[The following extract from a private letter, the writer of which little thought it would ever appear in these pages, has been kindly sent to us from India. It is interesting, partly as a spirited description, by an eye-witness, of a recent Indian battle-piece, but more especially in connection with an event which his country will long deplore, namely, the fall of the gallant Major Wigram Battye of the Guides, on April 2d, in Afghanistan.—ED. B. M.]

“FATIHABAD, April 8, 1879.

“MY DEAR COLONEL, — . . .

We had reached this place only the day before, and General Gough was congratulating himself on the number of Khans who had come in to him, and upon the able way in which, for a novice, he performed the part of a political, when the signallers notified from a hill close to camp that large bodies of men were collecting on some knolls about three miles distant. Hamilton of the Guides' Cavalry was ordered to reconnoitre with fifty men, . . . and found the report quite true, and estimated the numbers at four thousand. They seemed to be going through some evolutions, but were not advancing upon our camp. We saw three or four white standards, and a smaller number of red ones. There could be no doubt regarding their intentions. Rather than wait for a night attack, it was decided to take the initiative, and attack them at once. Cavalry and horse-artillery led the way. The infantry was left to keep up as best they could. This was . . . and nearly resulted in disaster later on. At the end of about three miles, we came upon a wide stony plateau, having a dry river-course on each side, and ending, at its far end, in a ridge of low hills, on the tops of which were the enemy, intrenched behind *sangahs* (stone-walls). They did not fire on us until within

800 yards. At this distance the four guns were brought into action. . . . The enemy then changed their formation into a wide single line of men, extending along the entire ridge of hills in front of us, and dipping on each side into the nullahs on our flanks. Seeing that the guns did them little damage, they came down the front of their raised position on to the plateau, and poured in a brisk fire at 500 yards. As men and horses were beginning to drop, and as we had no infantry, the guns were ordered to retire; and a troop was dismounted to cover their retreat. While this was being done, shots began to come from the nullah on our left flank, only a hundred yards from the guns. The position was now critical. They were outflanking us on both sides, in a horse-shoe line; and the guns were in extreme danger, unless, of course, the alternative were adopted of galloping them off the ground, leaving the wounded to the tender mercies of the Pathans. . . . Then was heard a sound as welcome as the (apocryphal) ‘Campbells are coming’ was to the Lucknow garrison. Our infantry had doubled up for nearly a mile; and the rattle of their Martinis was the finest music I have ever heard. They were on our left only, and drove in the enemy's right. The Guides' Cavalry then went forward at a trot against the enemy's left. This grew

into a gallop. The Sikhs gave that peculiar cry of theirs (you must have heard it), like the moan of a high wind; and in a few minutes the plain was strewn with 200 bodies. I . . . heard a shout—‘Battye Sahib màrà gàyè!’ (Battye is killed) and about 60 yards from where I was, found poor Battye dead. Death must have been instantaneous after the second shot; for the ball had gone through his heart. His face was pale, but its expression had nothing of pain in it. He lived only for his profession; and nothing can be more fitting than to die also for what we have lived for. There were many incidents that day, but none so

affecting as that when we returned to camp. Battye’s body had been sent in, of course, at once. The men stood in groups round his tent, many of them crying like children—men who had not hesitated to risk their lives. They said little; but I overheard one remark: ‘Why were we not all killed instead of him? for there are thousands like us, but not in all the world such another as he.’* Our own loss was 28 wounded, and 4 killed. . . . This has effectually cowed this tribe (Hugianis). We went out, two days after, to blow up their towers and burn their villages, but they never put in an appearance. The road is now open to Gandamak.”

* In the Indian correspondence of the ‘Times’ of May 5th we come upon the following touching paragraph: “There is a very sacred spot at Jellalabad where rest some of the victims of the late sad disaster in the Cabul river, and especially the remains of Wigram Battye, a hero whose praises fill every mouth. I lately overtook a Sepoy of the Guides proceeding to the grave to water the flowers with which the affection of his devoted comrades and soldiers has embellished it. ‘The whole regiment,’ said he, in his simple Punjab language, ‘weeps for Battye; the regiment would have died to a man rather than that harm should befall Battye.’”

BANK FAILURES AND THEIR REMEDIES.

THE calamitous bank failures which occurred in October last, both in Scotland and in England, produced an agitation of the public mind entirely unprecedented of its kind: and the natural outcome and sequel of this widespread alarm is the new Banking and Joint-stock Companies Bill. No one can question that ample grounds existed for the public apprehension. Scotland at this moment remains strewn with wrecked fortunes from the fall of the City of Glasgow Bank; and England, although in a lesser degree, has similarly experienced how terrible are the disasters that may be produced by the failure of joint-stock banking. Even if the failure of the City of Glasgow Bank had stood alone, its consequences have been so appalling as to justify widespread alarm. No one dreamed that such an amount of mismanagement and persistent fraud was within the pale of actual possibility; while the magnitude of the ruin and suffering so produced could not fail to strike dismay throughout the community at large. Unlike ordinary commercial disasters, the ruin in this case has for the most part been complete and irremediable. The consequences, in their worst features, remain as severe as at the first. The suffering and misery so produced are like unstanched wounds, bleeding to-day as they did six months ago. The signs of it meet us in the streets; they still stand like spectres at our doors.

The failure of the Western Bank in 1857 was a severe calamity for Scotland; but the fall of the City of Glasgow Bank has written its tale so deeply in the hearts' blood of thousands that it must figure as a dismal chapter in every history of

our country. A bank intrusted with eight millions of deposits, having nearly seven-score branches, a paid-up capital of a million, and with 1292 shareholders, suddenly fell into ruins, owing upwards of six millions of money, and leaving its shareholders liable, jointly and severally, for this enormous debt. The depositors of these eight millions suddenly found the doors of the bank shut, and the whole of their money locked up: a hardship and trading-difficulty all the more severe owing to the majority of the depositors being poor people, unable to obtain credit—no less than 43,000 out of the 59,000 depositors holding less than £100 each. Then there was the closing of the branch-establishments, 133 in number, whereby some three or four hundred managers and clerks were, without a moment's warning, thrown out of employ, and at a time when a great commercial depression made employment almost unprocurable. Yet, severe as these consequences were, they were hardly thought of amidst the utter impoverishment which befell the shareholders of the fallen establishment. Ruin was suddenly thrown broadcast over Scotland. The blow fell especially upon the savings of the nation—upon the self-denying class who were laying-by for old age and young families, and upon those for whom these savings had been made. Many a manse in our quiet glens now sees Destitution at its door, brought thither by the very means which to human eye appeared best adapted for warding it off. Many a widow living quietly and thriftily with her children in a "flat" in Edinburgh or Glasgow now finds the means of livelihood wrenched from

her grasp—her humble furniture seized, and hardly a roof left over the heads of herself and orphans. The cup of bitterness has had to be drunk to the dregs by many in England as well as in the northern part of the kingdom: but even the worst of the English bank failures has been, we might almost say trivial compared to what has befallen Scotland. The appalling misery produced, and the intensely pitiable character of the calamity, was strikingly shown by the case of the five elderly sisters, told at the time by the Rev. Dr Smith of Edinburgh: "Never to the day of my death," he said, "shall I forget the time I first saw them. It was nine days after this bank failure. Never a meal had been cooked in that house,—their clothes had never been taken off their backs, and they had never laid themselves down in bed; but they had sat there together, bewildered and amazed, vainly hoping that somehow the good God would come to take them away from the evil that was to come." Where are these helpless sufferers now, and how and where are hundreds of others equally submerged by that destroying deluge? And how do the authors of all this suffering bear to think of their victims, many of whom would be only too glad to recover their means of livelihood by becoming prisoners for eight or sixteen months? It is a light choice between that and a life-imprisonment in the workhouse! or than a pinching penury and ragged scramble amid cold and hunger and the woful frailties of age to obtain the rude necessities of mere animal life.

The banks of Scotland, unlike those of England, are few in number, and accordingly or proportionately are large and wealthy establishments; and their stock has for generations been regarded as the

safest and most suitable kind of investment for the money of all classes. The shares of the English joint-stock banks are chiefly, and in many cases almost exclusively, held by the mercantile classes; but in Scotland, bank shares are most numerous held by the non-trading classes. Our Scots banks, in fact, are national institutions, of which the people are proud, and which all classes have trusted; and especially have they been trusted with the reserve wealth, be it great or small, of the non-trading portion of the community. They have been the depositories of the moneys laboriously saved and laid-up for old age, and for families otherwise helpless when the bread-winner is removed—for dependent sisters, the widow, and the orphan. It is upon these dependent classes that the failure of the City of Glasgow Bank has fallen most heavily, certainly most painfully. The entire loss of the shares, of the money invested in purchasing them, must of itself have brought impoverishment upon a large number of the shareholders, who have been dependent for their income upon the dividends, and for their wealth, however small, upon the value of the shares. Yet the loss of this million of bank capital has proved but a small part of the calamity: for, besides this large sum, five millions and more have likewise been lost: and thus, besides the total loss of their own money, the shareholders are required to make good another sum more than five times as large,—money intrusted to the Bank's keeping by the public, and which has been squandered by the directors.

And where has all this money gone to? What has become of the six millions and more, which have been as hopelessly lost as if they had been dropped into the deepest depths of the Atlantic? Here again there is

not an atom of consolation to be found. Had the money been spent, however badly, in this country, among our own people, there would have been this comfort at least, that what some of us lost others got. This would have been no compensation to the rightful owners, but still the money would not have been lost to the country. By far the greater portion of the $2\frac{3}{4}$ millions sterling lost by the Western Bank went in this way—to the Macdonalds, and Monteiths, and other reckless firms at home. But the six millions lost by the City of Glasgow Bank have gone to the four winds of heaven—to all parts of the world except Scotland. Capital equivalent to many tons' weight of gold has been shot away to Canada, the United States, India, Australia, and New Zealand—to bolster up American railways, rotten mercantile firms in Bombay, and land-companies at the antipodes. It is a financial disaster to Scotland unprecedented save by the unfortunate Darien Scheme. But that was a noble enterprise, which failed only because it came too soon; nor even on that account, but for the hostility of the Dutch and Spaniards, aided or connived at by our new Dutch king, William III. Scotsmen are not ashamed of that enterprise, fearfully disastrous though it proved. It would have planted a New Caledonia upon the Isthmus of the New World,—the gateway between the two great oceans of the world, across which the commerce of the nations has at length begun now to flow, and where the old Darien Scheme will ere long be carried out, no longer by little Scotland, but by a concurrence of the leading commercial Powers of the world. But it is derogatory to that bold-hearted and far-seeing national venture even to name it in connection with the corruption, selfish-

ness, and folly of this fallen Bank in Glasgow.

It is really appalling to think of the smallness and narrowness of the cause, and the meanness of the agents, of the present national disaster. Half-a-dozen individuals, not one of them of any mark in the country—hardly even of any mark in their own city or circle—seated in a Bank Board-room in Glasgow, have spread havoc, ruin, and broken hearts through a whole country. The disparity betwixt the magnitude of the disaster and the meanness of the agents is as striking as if a nest of moles or rats had undermined and brought to the ground a stately palace or impregnable fortress. We wish we could say no more than this. But, as now proved in the courts of justice, while working like moles in the dark, these human agents of destruction all of them permitted, and some of them deliberately perpetrated, a long-continued system of fraud and deception, altogether unparalleled in the extent of its disastrous results.

Never before has any bank in the United Kingdom failed for so vast a sum of indebtedness; and never before has there been such an amount of deliberate deception and long-continued falsification of accounts. Six millions of money lost by a bank which held little more than eight millions of deposits! This mushroom bank, truly, has had a career as remarkable as—of late years at least—it has been infamous. The City of Glasgow Bank was the youngest of all our Scotch banks—dating only from 1839. But it pushed its business with remarkable energy. Its branches, 133 in all, outnumbered those of any other of its older rivals. It carried its operations into every part of Scotland, gathering a rich harvest of many

small savings in every town and village. And it is only justice to its numerous agents to say that these branches were honestly and ably managed; and to no individuals in the country did the news of the fall of the Bank occasion more astonishment than to the managers of its own branches. The Bank's reputation, although never equalling that of our old banks, stood high. To all appearance, it was in the highest degree successful and flourishing. Year by year it paid splendid dividends; and the price of its shares was almost equal to those of the Bank of England itself. We now know that this price was fictitious; we now know that, to force up and maintain the shares at this very high price, the directors actually employed £200,000 (one-fifth of the subscribed capital of the Bank) in buying up the Bank's shares whenever any of them were for sale; while they kept the dividends in proper ratio to the price by the simple process of paying whatever dividends they pleased — paying them first out of the capital, and, when that was gone, out of the deposits! No wonder, then, that the Bank appeared to be flourishing, and that it was well trusted by the public. While paying dividends steadily rising in amount till they reached 12 per cent, the price of its £100 stock was in 1875 £228, in 1876 the same, and in 1878 no less than £243. Over how many years this course of deception was practised, has not even now been ascertained; but, considering the determined facts, it is no incredible supposition that the Bank was unsound even twenty years ago, and that it was a fearfully misplaced mercy which allowed it to reopen its doors anew after its collapse in 1857. But in the latter years at least, the fraud and mendacity of

its directors were almost beyond belief. At the annual meeting in July last, the Directors' Report gave a most flourishing account of the year's business and of the position of the Bank. The shareholders were assured that the directors had managed the business so well that, despite the universal depression of trade, the Bank had made a net profit during the year of £125,000, and that it had a surplus of £1,700,000 over its liabilities. In other words, the shareholders were assured that, if the Bank were wound up there and then, although a most profitable 12-per-cent-paying business would be stopped, there would be £700,000 to divide among the shareholders, besides the return of the million of subscribed capital. The directors even went through the farce of "carrying forward" a portion of their last year's "profits," and of "writing off" a small sum lost by a defalcation in the Isle of Man!

Within less than four months afterwards, the Bank closed its doors—not only utterly insolvent, but without any remaining money of any kind upon which the directors could lay their ruthless hands. There was no panic or crisis in the commercial world, such as usually precedes bank failures, and which often are so severe as to imperil the position even of the soundest of these establishments. There was no run on the Bank: the hapless depositors went on paying in their money as usual up to the very hour of closing. The Bank fell like a castle of cards, and yet without a breath blowing against it. Not merely had all its capital been lost, years ago, but almost every shilling of the deposits at the head office had been paid away. The directors had discounted and re-discounted, manufacturing paper securities to the utmost possible extent; and at

last, when some of their bills or acceptances were returned from London, the Bank was so utterly empty either of money or money's worth, that the directors themselves had to hang up the placard on the doors announcing the fall. The collapse was so unexpected that at first people talked of setting the Bank agoing again! Vain hope!—so terribly undeceived. We need not revive the memories of that appalling time, nor narrate the stages by which hope passed into utter despair. But to complete our statement of the facts, we may add that, when the Bank's coffers were examined, not even the gold which the Bank was required by law to hold in connection with its note-circulation, was forthcoming. As the City of Glasgow Bank was established only six years before the Scottish Bank Act of 1845, its "authorised" note-circulation (*i.e.*, the amount of notes which it was allowed to issue without holding gold for them) was only £72,921; but, for some years past, its actual note-issues have amounted to about £800,000, for which it ought to have kept upwards of £700,000 in gold; whereas it is now apparent, not only from the emptiness of its coffers when it closed, but from the *private* or interlined entries in the Bank's books, that no such sum, nor anything approaching to it, had been kept in hand at all.

Momentous and historically interesting as are the circumstances of the fall of this great Bank, we here recapitulate them because they exhibit in the completest and most striking form all the perils which can possibly attend banking. Imagination itself could not conceive any worse case; indeed, imagination, in the form of public expectation, at first refused to realise the truth. But here, in this single

case, the public have clearly before them all the perils and disasters, against the occurrence of which in the future they now, most naturally, desire to guard themselves.

The vast possibilities of loss connected with banking arise from the fact of its trading mainly with other people's money, only a very small part of which is called for at any given time. A good-going bank is constantly receiving money from year to year, and even from day to day, which fraudulent directors can employ to cover their contemporaneous losses. It is the normal condition of banks that the deposits steadily augment, increasing with the growing wealth of the country. For example, in 1867 the deposits of the City of Glasgow Bank were £5,300,000; when it stopped they were £8,300,000,—an increase of upwards of £270,000 per annum throughout these eleven years. In other words, every working day, despite the money paid out to depositors, nearly £1000 was added to the money intrusted to its keeping. Thus the Bank could actually make losses to the amount of more than a quarter of a million a-year, after its own capital was gone, and still have money enough in hand to meet the ordinary demands upon it. As a matter of fact, the loss of the City of Glasgow Bank has been on a somewhat greater scale even than this,—the loss being at the rate of £300,000 a-year since 1857. In this way, then—owing to the constant increase of the deposits—an insolvent bank may hold on its course for years, and until, as in the case of the Glasgow Bank, nearly the whole mass of the deposits has been swept away, leaving the shareholders to make good the amount if they can.

Now, then, what is to be done? All the remedial proposals which

have been made, or which possibly can be made, resolve themselves under two heads: either to put new restrictions upon the banks' power of dealing with the money intrusted to their keeping, or to relax the liability of the bank proprietors in connection with this money. Neither of these proposals is desirable in itself; both of them are attended by evils; and whether or not they should be adopted turns entirely upon the question, not very readily determinable, whether the benefits to be so obtained are in excess of the evils or disadvantages which must accompany them. To restrict the opportunities for evil in banking is also to restrict its benefits; and to make banking safe for the shareholders, by diminishing their liabilities, is to make it anything but safe for the public.

Hitherto, and naturally, when any serious bank failures have occurred, the first thought has been given to the interests of the public. The desire has been to protect the depositors, who have intrusted their money to the banks. On the present occasion, however, the case has been quite otherwise. The sympathies of the public have been profoundly affected by the deplorable sufferings which have overtaken the proprietors of the fallen banks: and under this temporary emotion, although produced by a wholly exceptional disaster, there has arisen a desire to relieve bank proprietors from a portion of their liability to repay the money intrusted to their keeping. What the public desires is always regarded as a good thing; and when that desire has been given effect to by an Act of Parliament, people cease to consider whether it is good or bad: but we are not convinced that the present desire for relaxing the liability of bank proprietors is widely entertained, and we should be sorry to

see any change made in our banking system, especially in our Scots system, except after very careful consideration. It is natural that banks should take advantage of the present state of popular feeling in order to reduce their own liabilities to the public; and certainly it has been the banks, chiefly some of the London banks, who have urged the Government to make a legislative change in this direction.

So far as regards the general public, or their mouthpieces the newspapers, there has been no definite suggestion of remedies. While the desire that "something should be done" was generally expressed, there was not any concurrence of opinion as to what ought to be done; and we incline to think that the public desire was rather a mere outcome of the sympathy for the suffering bank shareholders than any deliberate or recognised wish that the liability of banking companies should be reduced, and "limited" like ordinary joint-stock undertakings. Be this as it may, undoubtedly the Government was expected to "do something:" and immediately after the reassembling of Parliament in February, the Chancellor of the Exchequer gave notice of his intention to bring in a Bill relating to joint-stock banks. The public have now to say whether they have got what they wanted: and in determining this point, they will have to make up their mind—which we suspect they have not hitherto done—as to what they really do want.

The new Bill is a very moderate one. In introducing it, the Chancellor of the Exchequer wisely deprecated "panic legislation:" and a consideration of the Bill suggests that, of his own judgment, he would have preferred to do nothing at all; but, since the Government was expected to "do something," he

has complied with the public desire in the most moderate manner possible. We are doubtful whether the Bill will do any good; but whether its principle (*viz.*, of reducing the liability of banks to repay their depositors) be right or wrong, its provisions at least are harmless.

It is true that the Bill, as originally framed, contains a clause which we regard as positively objectionable in itself, and objectionable also as regards the manner in which it was brought forward. We refer to the clause whereby the Scots banks which do business in London are prohibited from availing themselves of the presumed benefits conferred by the Bill unless they close their London offices and restrict their banking business to Scotland, or else give up their right to issue notes. Five years ago, Mr Goschen, as spokesman for the London banks, brought in a Bill, the sole object of which was to compel the Scots banks to withdraw from London. It was a Bill based upon class rivalry—framed expressly to give a monopoly to the London banks, antagonistic to the principle of fair-play and competition, such as has long been established in every branch of industry in the United Kingdom,—albeit banking, in some important respects, is still excepted. Mr Goschen's Bill fell dead: and it seems strange that a proposal of this kind should be revived in the present Bill. It is true that, in the present Bill, the exclusion of the Scots banks from London is not proposed absolutely: but the wish to do so is plainly there; and it indicates unmistakably that, as we have already said, it is the London bankers who have been the Chancellor of the Exchequer's chief advisers, and perhaps, we may say, the real authors of the present Bill. We can only wonder that a statesman of the sound judgment and

broad sympathies which distinguish the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, should have given any countenance to a retrograde proposal of this kind, and should have introduced it, as by a side-wind, into a measure with which it has no natural connection.

The most probable explanation, as seems to us, is of a kind which of itself possesses much interest to the banking community, and especially to the banks of Scotland. The Chancellor of the Exchequer stated that ere long our whole banking system will have to be reconsidered; and any one who has paid attention to the opinions on this subject expressed by our leading statesmen during the last eight or ten years, must be aware that the great change contemplated by these authorities is to abolish the existing bank-notes altogether, and to claim the "right of issue" for the State. Also, in introducing the present Bill, the Chancellor of the Exchequer stated that, with a view to the larger measure which was impending, it behoved him to take care lest he increased the obstacles in the way of that impending measure. All this being interpreted is, that as the Scots banks must be compensated for the loss of their note-issues when the impending change is made, it is expedient to deprive them in advance of this old and valuable privilege and property.

Apart from this foreign, and we may say interpolated, clause, the purport of the Bill is to promote and facilitate the reduction by banks and joint-stock companies of their existing liability to pay their debts. The Bill professedly applies to joint-stock companies of all kinds—it is "A Banking and Joint-stock Companies Bill;" but, in effect, it is designed specially for banks; and it proposes to enable these

establishments to reduce their liability to repay the money intrusted to their keeping, and by trading in which they obtain by far the largest amount of their profits. Now it must be remembered—surely it cannot for a moment be forgotten—that “unlimited liability,” the duty to pay one’s debts in full, is both ordinary law and common justice. It is not a peculiar or exceptional obligation; it is the “common law” of this and of every civilised country, and indeed of every part of the world where Law is established and justice recognised. It is the law under which every individual, trader or non-trader, carries on his business or expenditure. It is the normal condition under which trade, and all private life, goes on. The “limited” system is of recent date; and it may be granted that the “tendency of the age” is in favour of it, at least as regards commercial enterprise. But, of all trades, Banking has the least claim to enjoy a limited liability for its debts. It stands apart from all other trading business in this most important respect, that it trades largely, indeed chiefly, with other people’s money. The responsibilities of banking being greater, its obligations ought likewise to be greater,—certainly not less than prevails in any kind of trade. Public opinion, of course, must determine the matter: if “limited” banking is to be the order of the day, so be it: but no one can dissent if we say, as a fact, that banking is the last trade to which the limited system ought to be applied, and in regard to which the application of that system should be most jealously watched by the community. A vital element of a bank’s credit and popularity will always consist in the extent of its liability to repay its depositors. Nevertheless, when we come to examine this matter, it

will be found, as a practical affair, that a bank’s liability to its creditors depends chiefly upon conditions quite irrespective of whether that liability be limited or unlimited in the eye of the law.

It may surprise the public to learn how extensively the “limited” system prevails among the banking companies of the kingdom, and also that the oldest of our joint-stock banks, which stand in the first rank of such establishments, have existed from the first under the limited system. It has always been commonly believed that a fundamental principle of the Scottish banking system has been that of unlimited liability—that every shareholder is responsible for the debts of the bank to the full extent of his means. Mr Gilbart, the highest authority of his day on banking subjects, when describing the distinctive features of the Scots system in his ‘Practical Treatise on Banking,’ stated that “the *private fortune* of every partner is answerable for the debts of the bank.” It has been the boast of Scotland that never yet has the public, or any single depositor, lost a shilling by the failure of any of our banks; and this proud result has certainly been owing to the fact that every Scots bank which has failed has been founded upon the common-law or unlimited principle of liability. But it now appears unquestionable that our three “old banks”—namely, the Bank of Scotland, the Royal, and the British Linen Company—are limited banks in the strictest sense of the term. And so also is the Bank of England. This, we repeat, is quite contrary to the old and ordinary belief: and, as a matter of law, the point has remained a matter of question almost up to the present time. The explanation is, that these banks are chartered cor-

porations; and (besides a little-noticed statement upon the point contained in the Report of the Parliamentary Committee of both Houses in 1826, and repeated by Sir R. Peel in 1844) in the recent case of "*The City of Glasgow Bank v. Muir and Others*," it was distinctly laid down by both the Scots and English Judges that "a corporation is not liable beyond the amount of its own subscribed funds." This enunciation of the law, it is true, was made without any reference to the above-mentioned chartered banks, and simply with reference to "corporations" in general; but it is now beyond question that the three old Scots banks, in common with the Bank of England, are, as corporations, exempt from any liability to their creditors beyond the amount of their subscribed capital. This is also officially shown by a Government return, just published, in which the banks of the United Kingdom are classed under separate heads as "limited" and "unlimited."

This parliamentary return is highly interesting in many respects. In the first place, it shows the actual and relative extent to which the rival systems of limited and unlimited liability prevail in our banking system. Of the 133 joint-stock banks of the kingdom, 80 are limited and 53 are unlimited. The Limited banks show, in the aggregate, a "nominal" or subscribed capital of £76,787,326, a paid-up capital of £19,276,292, and the number of shareholders is 38,818. The Unlimited banks show a nominal capital of £66,806,100, a paid-up capital of £22,671,215, and the number of shareholders is 51,601. Thus the number of limited compared with unlimited joint-stock banks is nearly as 8 to 5; their nominal capital is fully one-sixth more, while their paid-up capital is

somewhat less than that of the unlimited banks; but the number of shareholders in the unlimited banks is nearly one-third greater than in the limited. This latter fact shows that whatever may be the extent of the present panic as to the perils of unlimited liability in banking, no such apprehension has hitherto prevailed.

The statistics given in this return bring out clearly the highly important point which we have already stated—namely, that the real and practical liability of a bank—its actual reserve-liability to pay its debts—cannot be judged of by its *legal* title and constitution, whether that be limited or unlimited. The actual liability of a limited bank is measurable by the difference between its paid-up and its nominal capital—in other words, by the amount of its capital subscribed but not paid-up. And in some cases this of itself amounts, as a practical matter, to unlimited liability. It is rarely that any bank fails for an amount exceeding, or even equalling, five times its subscribed capital: indeed we believe the City of Glasgow Bank is the only one which has ever contracted debt to this amount. And the liquidation of this fallen bank, as well as other experience, shows that, with the exception of a few millionaires, the shareholders of banks or other joint-stock companies are utterly unable to pay five or six times the amount of their shares, even if they be "sold up" to the uttermost farthing. A "call" for five times the amount of the shares, with a very few exceptions, sweeps the whole body of shareholders into bankruptcy. Practically, therefore, unlimited liability becomes a worthless guarantee beyond (say) five times the amount of the share-capital when fully paid up. No doubt the list of shareholders may comprise a millionaire

or two, whose vast wealth may successfully be drawn upon to make good the remaining deficit; but still, we repeat, unlimited liability may be regarded as worthless to secure payment of debts exceeding five or six times the amount of the capital actually paid up. Accordingly, the credit of a bank, so far as the question of legal liability is concerned, depends very little upon whether the bank is limited or unlimited, but chiefly upon the proportion by which the subscribed capital exceeds the portion paid up. An unlimited bank, with all its capital paid up, really gives no greater security to the public than a limited bank in which the subscribed or nominal capital largely exceeds the capital paid up.

Now, even taking in the aggre-

gate the statistics of the limited banks given in this parliamentary return, it appears that only a fourth part (19 millions out of 76) of the capital due upon their shares has been paid up; so that these banks might lose, or incur debts to the amount of, *four* times the amount of their paid-up or actual trading capital, and yet the shareholders would be liable to make good the entire sum. When such is the average "reserve liability" (to use the new phrase) of these limited banks, it is needless to say that many of them stand much more favourably as regards the security, so far as legal liability is concerned, which they offer to the public. As examples, selected somewhat at random, of such banks, we may mention the following ones:—

LIMITED BANKS.

	Nominal Capital.	Paid-up Capital.	Proportion of Nominal to Paid-up Capital.
Birmingham Banking Co., . . .	£2,000,000	£160,000	12½ times.
Lancashire and Yorkshire Bank, . .	1,000,000	50,000	20 "
London and Provincial Bank, . . .	1,000,000	199,465	5 "
National Bank of New Zealand, . .	2,000,000	350,000	6 "
Union Bank of Birmingham, . . .	1,000,000	50,050	20 "
Western District Bank, . . .	700,000	14,773	46 "
Anglo-Belgian Bank, . . .	2,000,000	3,250	600 "

Here, then, the reserve-liability of these limited banks ranges from five up to ten, twenty, and even forty times the amount of the paid-up capital—that is, the capital at present actually invested in their business. Thus, for all practical purposes, there is no difference between them and unlimited banks: for, as already said, the heaviest loss ever incurred in banking (*viz.*, that of the City of Glasgow Bank) has barely exceeded six times the amount of its paid-up or invested capital; and further, experience shows that no ordinary body of bank shareholders can meet so heavy a liability without being utterly ruined. On the other hand,

there are a few limited banks whose subscribed capital is almost or wholly paid up (like the Agra Bank and Anglo-Egyptian); and consequently these banks offer little or no reserve-liability, and therefore, *quoad hoc*, stand in a very inferior position to the unlimited banks.

It is obvious, therefore, that the fact of a bank being limited or unlimited is no criterion whatever of the security which it offers to the public, and that nearly one-half of the limited banks practically possess as large a reserve-liability as any unlimited bank does—being liable for from five to ten times the amount of capital invested in their business. Moreover, not a few of

the limited banks, and also of the unlimited companies have reserve-funds, which further strengthen their position. The public must look not to the legal title and constitution of a bank, but to its actual position at any given time, as shown by the proportion which its paid-up capital bears to its nominal capital,—every limited bank being liable to the full amount of this latter sum.

So much for the question between limited and unlimited banks. But there is another and wholly different element of consideration in judging of the security offered by any bank. Not less, and in some cases much more, important than the credit which a bank possesses from its capital or reserve-liability, is the credit due to hereditary or long-established good management. We know no more striking examples of this latter and most honourable kind of credit and *prestige* than that of the “old banks” of Scotland, and also the Bank of England. In consequence of their charters, all of these banks are “limited:” they are not liable for a shilling of debt beyond the amount of their nominal capital; while the nominal capital has long ago been fully paid up by three of these banks—viz., the Bank of England, the Royal Bank of Scotland, and the British Linen Company; while, in the case of the fourth, viz. the Bank of Scotland, the nominal capital has been paid up to the extent of two-thirds. Yet are there any banks in the kingdom which stand higher in the confidence of the public than these? Not only has their solvency been maintained throughout many generations, but even their credit has remained unquestioned during all the monetary tempests which have repeatedly swept over the kingdom. Under the absurd and pernicious

restrictions imposed upon it by the Act of 1844, the Bank of England has thrice during the last thirty years been placed in artificial embarrassments, requiring the law to be suspended in its favour, although without its credit being for a moment shaken. But these three “old banks” of Scotland, fettered though they have been since 1845 by similar legislation, have successfully withstood every crisis, from that of 1826 downwards. They have not needed to ask for a relaxation of the restrictions which an absurd legislation has imposed upon them; and, it may be added, had they needed such a relaxation, it would not have been granted to them!

Not until after the present Bill has become law shall we be able to know the extent to which the (at present) unlimited banks intend to avail themselves of its facilities for “limitation.” And it will be an important matter for the public to observe the manner and extent to which the new facilities are employed by the several banks. As already shown, a large number of the limited banks are at present (and so long as their paid-up capital is kept at its present proportion to the nominal capital) for all practical purposes unlimited. Applying the same test to the unlimited banks, it appears that, despite the new Bill, many of them will remain practically unlimited. Taking the unlimited banks in the aggregate, it appears that only one-third (22 millions out of 66) of their nominal capital has been paid up; so that, even if “limited to the full extent,” they would be liable for three times the amount of their invested capital. With nearly one-half of these unlimited banks, of course, the surplus of nominal over paid-up capital is considerably larger: for example:—

UNLIMITED BANKS.

	Nominal Capital.	Paid-up Capital.	Proportion of Nominal to Paid-up Capital.
London and Westminster, . . .	£10,000,000	£2,000,000	5 times.
London Joint-Stock, . . .	4,000,000	1,200,000	3 $\frac{1}{3}$ "
West Riding Union, . . .	3,160,600	316,060	10 "
Capital and Counties, . . .	2,500,000	300,000	8 $\frac{1}{3}$ "

Accordingly, some of the unlimited banks must remain, for long (*i.e.*, until in course of time they call up their capital), practically unlimited, even were they to become limited in the strictest sense in the eye of the law, by Act of Parliament. The new Bill does not enable any bank to reduce the amount of its subscribed or nominal capital, but only to limit its liability to two or more times that amount. Any bank, however, without legislation or any change in its constitution, may reduce its present reserve-liability by increasing its paid-up capital, while not increasing its nominal capital: so that a bank's practical liability to its depositors may be varied from time to time. Indeed, we cannot state too strongly that the mere fact of a bank being limited or unlimited, is no criterion whatever as to the actual liability which attaches to it. The public must examine its position at any given time for themselves; and as regards the present position of the banks of the kingdom, it is set forth clearly in the recent parliamentary return already referred to, where, for each of them, the nominal and paid-up capital is given.

Considering the facts now passed in review, we hold, and we think it will be admitted, that the proper datum or basis in regulating the reserve-liability of banks is not the nominal capital, but the capital *paid up*, actually invested in business, and which has to be lost before the reserve-liability comes into play. And if legislation is to deal afresh with the matter—or

if, in the face of long experience, banking is to be treated as a trade full of hazards and fraud,—we hold that the rule ought to be that every bank should be liable for so many times the amount of its paid-up capital. The public would then know, readily and exactly, how every bank stood relatively to its liability for its debts. The liability would be uniform; it would also be constant and invariable; and further, it would be well known. To do this, perhaps, would require a general Banking Bill. But is the panic really so great—are the public so afraid of a speedy recurrence of so exceptional a disaster as that of the fall of the City of Glasgow Bank,—that we should press for immediate legislation, which must be merely fractional, and totally inadequate as a permanent settlement?

There is one matter connected with the new Banking Bill which is hardly satisfactory. The purport of the Bill is to give facilities to unlimited banks to become limited. Now any banking or other company is at liberty, under the law as it stands, to reconstitute itself under conditions of limited liability; and if the object of the present legislation were simply to save trouble and expense in making such a change, no one could object. But it seems that what is wanted is not to save expense, but to avoid publicity. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in introducing the Bill, stated that the banking companies, or at least those at whose instance he framed the Bill, were mortally

afraid of the loss of credit which would befall them if their change from "unlimited" to "limited" were brought under the notice of their customers in the elaborate and public manner requisite under the law as it stands. And, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer said frankly, it was to meet the wishes or terrors of these banks, by lessening the publicity of the change, that the present Bill was introduced. We cannot admire such procedure. In practical result it may be harmless, but there is a very mean look about it. Indeed we may go further, and say that it is not fair to those unlimited banks which choose to remain unlimited that the change to limited liability made by others of their number should be screened from public notice. If there be any virtue in unlimited liability—as in the abstract there undoubtedly is—the banks which bravely and honourably prefer to remain unlimited, acknowledging the common-law liability to pay debts in full, ought not to lose any part of the benefit of their superior position through their more timid comrades obtaining special legal facilities for changing into a lower grade "in a quiet sort of way."

For the present, at least, there need be no apprehension on the part of the public that the banks of the kingdom will restrict their liability to their depositors to an undue extent. Many of the banks, whether limited or otherwise in the eye of the law, will continue to offer to the public ample security. And their example and competition will prevent others from seeking to enter upon an opposite course. It is obvious, however, that this competition would cease, and the public would have no choice, if all the banks were to combine and reduce their liability to their depositors to

the most limited extent. But in such a case the public would have to take measures to protect their rights, their money; and the natural result would be to create a demand that the banks should be likewise limited in their employment of the money intrusted to their keeping. There would be a demand that every bank should keep in hand a Reserve in connection with its Deposits; such as is established by law in the United States, where all the banks are "limited," and where every bank, besides keeping a reserve for its note-circulation, has to keep a reserve in cash equal to one-fourth of its deposits. Such an arrangement seriously lessens the economy of capital which it is the special object of banking to effect, and we trust it will never need to be introduced into this country. It would diminish the profits of bankers, but it would likewise diminish the benefits of banking to the general community. It is to be deprecated upon every ground, save that of increased security for deposits: and we sincerely hope, and confidently believe, that our banks will continue, whether by good management or reserve-liability, to give such ample security to the public as to render this, or any such like restriction, as unnecessary as, under ordinary circumstances, it is undesirable.

Calmly considering the whole case—bearing in mind that the fact of a bank being "limited" does not necessarily, as a practical matter, diminish the security which is offered to the public, nor the responsibility of the shareholders below that of many unlimited banks—remembering, too, that good and honest management is an efficient guarantee of itself,—we find it difficult to admire, or even to attach importance, to the present

Bill. There would have been no such Bill but for the fall of the City of Glasgow Bank; and to legislate for so extremely exceptional an outcome of persistent fraud and wild mismanagement is like legislating for a phenomenon of crime such as possibly may occur once in three hundred years. To our eye, the word "Panic" is writ large across the face of the Bill. It is not designed on behalf of the creditors of banks, whether depositors or noteholders: on the contrary, it diminishes their security. Its special object is *to give increased security to bank shares as a form of investment*,—and this much, not as regards the public at large, but only as regards wealthy individuals, great capitalists—a class who, above all others, are best able to look after themselves. No doubt it is advantageous that wealthy persons should be comprised among bank shareholders, as a security to the public; but the advantage ceases in proportion as the liability of the bank is limited; and in the case of a strictly limited bank, where the shares are all paid up, it matters not a straw whether there be wealthy men or not in the list of partners.

The fall of the City of Glasgow Bank has caused a "scare" as to the risks of banking. So far from its being full of perils, banking is as safe a kind of business as can be carried on. The money is advanced for short periods, and in comparatively small sums: it is impossible that any great and sudden loss can occur: there must be a persistency of bad management in "throwing good money after bad." This rarely occurs except when, as in the case of the City of Glasgow Bank, the directors are personally interested in continuing those risky or hopeless advances. The last five years, also, has been

a period peculiarly fraught with temptations to this perilous course. The collapse of trade came unexpectedly, and every one has been confidently expecting a speedy revival: and thus banks have been tempted to continue their advances, throwing good money after bad, in the hope that their customers would soon be as prosperous again as before. Yet how few are the banks which have yielded to this temptation! They may be counted upon the fingers of a single hand.

What is more, such a course could not in any case have led to ruin except through persistent concealment and actual fraud. A bank cannot lose all its paid-up capital in a few months; and yet, until the whole of this large amount is lost, and the reserve-fund also, the question of "limited" or "unlimited" cannot arise. Until this large loss is complete, the most strictly limited bank has not the smallest advantage over the most unlimited one. And before this loss is complete, nothing but the most deliberate fraud can conceal the bad position of the bank from its shareholders. The law sternly forbids the payment of dividends out of capital, and the dividends must disappear as soon as a bank ceases to make profits; and after that, the paid-up capital must be lost before any question of limited or unlimited liability can arise. Thus, even granting the grossest mismanagement, apart from deliberate fraud on the part of directors, the shareholders have ample opportunities of seeing the coming danger and stopping it. It was the wicked course of fraud pursued by the directors of the Glasgow Bank, by paying large dividends and by buying up the shares in order to give them a fictitious value long after the bank was insolvent, that lulled the shareholders to their ruin. It

is impossible to legislate upon the hypothesis of general fraud. To legislate either for a trade or a country as if it were a community of rogues, would make trade impracticable and life intolerable. The law deters from crime, by enacting penalties, but it cannot prevent its occurrence.

But even in the case of fraud, are bank shareholders really so helpless as seems to be imagined? Could the fall of the City of Glasgow Bank have happened as it did if the proprietors had exercised "due care and diligence," such as the law expects and common-sense demands?

An audit is certainly no new or uncommon thing in joint-stock business; and an independent audit, made by competent accountants, would keep the shareholders sufficiently informed of the position of their property so as to keep them free from the risks of unlimited, or even of "reserved" liability. That is the point, as regards the present question. Absolute accuracy is not requisite. If the audits be merely approximately correct, they will answer their purpose by warning the shareholders of danger before the loss amounts to that of the paid-up capital. After the scandalous failure of the City of Glasgow Bank, a system of independent audit is most desirable. Nor need the directors of the old banks consider such a course in any way derogatory to their well-established honour and reputation. In truth it has been entirely owing to the perfectly unblemished and unquestioned honour of the directors of our old banks that an auditing of bank accounts has not hitherto been regularly established. It is owing to the spotless reputation of the directors of our old banks—establishments all of which have stood the strain of a century and more—that the public too confidently and fatally

trusted the new member of their community which has so disgracefully perished.

It is not by making hundreds of small losses—by discounting as good scores of small bills that are worthless, and which are found to be worthless as they fall due in the course of three months or thereabouts—that banks come to grief. It is by making huge advances to a few firms, and in one form or another renewing these huge loans, that ruin overtakes banking companies. Such advances are not proper banking; and an auditor might justifiably call attention to them. But the matter is really far simpler than this. Let an auditor assure himself as to the existence of the capital and "reserves" of a bank, and it would be impossible for ruin to come suddenly or unexpectedly upon the shareholders. "Where is your capital?—show me the cash and Government securities which you hold as reserves; let me see that these correspond with your published balance-sheet." If the capital is there, in cash and consols, or other first-class securities, the bank cannot possibly be in danger. When one bank applies to another for assistance, it is by a very brief inspection of this kind that the position of the applicant bank is determined. Not even fraud could prevent an auditor from informing himself upon these fundamental points. Consols are readily producible, and so is the coin. Fraud is necessarily confined to a few individuals: no directors—not even those of the City of Glasgow Bank—could make their *employés* engage in their fraud and deception. Moreover, banking must be sunk to a low level indeed if its management is to be conducted on this hypothesis of fraud. It is most deplorable that such a view of the matter should even temporarily

prevail. After making every allowance for the trepidation occasioned by the fall of the City of Glasgow Bank, it is a strange thing if the public of Scotland should suddenly abandon and reverse its old faith in its banking establishments. For our own part, we cannot believe that such is the case; but we think the banks themselves—those of England rather than those in Scotland—are greatly, indeed chiefly, responsible for the panic, by besieging the Government with applications to relieve them from liabilities, by no means either new or unusual, and which, under simply good and honest management, exist only in name.

The Government are proceeding very leisurely with the Bill. Although we are now at the end of May, it has not yet been brought to a second reading: that is to say, even its principle or general object has not yet been submitted to the House of Commons. When presiding, in his usual excellent manner, at a Bankers' dinner, the Chancellor of the Exchequer recently stated that the Government are proceeding slowly with the Bill of deliberate purpose, in order to let the feeling of panic subside. And when the panic is over, we believe that it will be the opinion not only of the public, but of a majority of the banks themselves, that no such legislation is at present needed. The public—although not all the banks—are unanimous in approving the clause of the Bill which makes compulsory upon the banks who avail themselves of its provisions a regular publication of accounts in a satisfactory form,—a system which is greatly wanted in England and Ireland, but which has long been established among the banks of Scotland. But this benefit to the public, as already said, will only operate as regards the banks, com-

paratively few, which will or can avail themselves of the present Bill. On the other hand, the objections to, or drawbacks upon the Bill are very considerable, and the requirement for it is small.

One can hardly fail to see that the present panic threatens to bring about a crisis in banking practice and legislation. The banks, in alarm, think only of reducing their liability to the public; and our statesmen and the public, nay, the banks themselves, should keep clearly in view towards what goal or practical issue our acts and desires are now tending. Our banking system as a whole has given remarkable satisfaction: but its legislative constitution is illogical and anomalous,—the diversities are glaring, while the temptations to symmetry and uniformity are very strong, and doubtless will ultimately prevail. But what is to be our model? Were it to be strictly limited liability, we should infallibly and of necessity land in the American system, where the State has to impose stringent conditions for the security of the public; where a hard-and-fast cash-reserve of one-fourth of the deposits must be kept in hand, however severe may be the run upon the bank or the crisis which sweeps over the country; where the Government holds the security for the notes; and where a system of Government inspection is established over every bank in the country,—where a vast staff of Government inspectors or accountants is kept up, whose duty it is to overhaul all the books of the banks, and to obtain production of the cash and securities, at frequent times throughout the year, without notice, and on any day they please. Such a system is the natural concomitant of strictly "limited" banking. It is needless for our Ministers and statesmen to deprecate (as all of

them do) such an extension of Government work and responsibilities, and such State interference with banking, unless they at the same time resolve to maintain British banking on substantially its old footing as regards liability. It is to be regretted that legislative liability, which can only come into play in the case of insolvency, should have been raised by the banks themselves into paramount importance, obscuring the guarantee from sound and stable management by which insolvency becomes impossible in a business like banking. But this is the special feature of the present panic; and once this "liability" question is made paramount, it may lead us very far away, if not altogether astray, from our old moorings.

When introducing this Bill the Chancellor of the Exchequer made a pointed reference to the fact that a general Banking Bill for the kingdom, a revision or remodelment of our whole banking system, must be introduced before long,—upon which subject there seems to be a concurrence of opinion among some leading statesmen on both sides of the House; and we think it would be no loss if the present fractional measure were withdrawn. The Government have acted wisely

in tabling this Bill. There was a clamour—chiefly on the part of some of the unlimited banks—that the Government should do something to relieve the pecuniary responsibility of their shareholders; and in bringing forward this Bill, the Government have given the public an opportunity of determining what they actually desire. When the question is thus expressly put to them, it appears that a considerable number of the joint-stock banks themselves do not relish legislation; and when the panic is over—is it not already over?—we think the community at large will be of the same opinion. On reflection, it cannot fail to be seen that banking presents no peculiar hazards, and that, as the history of our old Scots banks shows, good management is far more effectual for the prevention of losses and disasters than the most elaborate legislation. Bank shareholders, like other parties, must exercise due care and judgment; but, despite the recent highly exceptional disasters, they may rest assured that banking is naturally and ordinarily one of the safest kinds of business,—as common opinion, and in Scotland the universal opinion, has long held it to be.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL'S MOTION.

THE debate on the Duke of Argyll's motion was another outburst of the extraordinary ill-feeling which has resulted amongst party men from the Eastern policy of the Government. The Liberal leaders seem so wholly unable to preserve any unity of action on this subject, or any consistency of speech in reference to it, that they must be thankful to find that with the gradual completion of the Berlin settlement all political discussion upon that policy is beginning to lose its interest, and the subject itself, with all its associations of Liberal failure and Liberal discredit, is rapidly receding into the past. Hardly any one will have cared to trouble themselves with the Duke of Argyll's speech, still less with his enormous book. The important points in the debate were the Ministerial declarations as to the real position of the country when all the transparent fables about English dishonour, failure, and delusions have been swept away. The vast majorities which in Parliament and the country have supported the Government turn a deaf ear to the repeated assurances that they are the victims of some strange delusions, and that the whole of the foreign policy which they have supported for the last four years is, if they did but know it, one continual scheme of dishonourable double-dealing, short-sighted disregard of their true interests, reckless indifference to their future security. They put all that on one side, as so much nonsense and rhodomontade. The men who utter it are equally forgetful of their own policy in the days of the Crimean war, and reckless of the responsibility which they incur by en-

couraging hostility both at home and abroad to the due execution of engagements to which the honour of the country has been solemnly pledged. What the people of this country, of all classes, are really interested in is, to ascertain how this settlement at Berlin is progressing towards completion—whether each item of its stipulations is being faithfully performed, and what risk there is of their being obliged to interfere by force of arms to compel its execution. The invariable answer which any fair observer of events would return to these questions is, that slowly but steadily the Treaty is being carried out; and every step in its progress denotes a fresh triumph of European law and order. It is reserved for English Liberals, from week to week, to prophesy its failure and gloat over its difficulties. And as the end approaches, and the close of a scene of violence and aggression is followed by the peaceful vindication of the new treaty-rights and stipulations, we have the profound discovery of the Duke of Argyll placed before the country, that the Treaty of Berlin is, after all, an imposture—only a “pale copy” of the Treaty of San Stefano; that it ruins the Turkish empire and does not in the least restrain Russia; and that, on the whole, his Grace is, notwithstanding all his vituperation, very well satisfied with it.

Political discussion of this kind is at once so ludicrous and so useless, that we turn for relief to the speeches of the responsible Ministers, to see whether it is possible to get a clear view of the position. As for the Opposition leaders, those who executed what is called the curve of 1876, have gone on curv-

ing ever since, and at last have constructed such a maze of obscurity and inconsistency that no human being can see his way through it. One part, for instance, of the Duke of Argyll's speech consisted of angry invective against the Ministry for permitting any infringement whatever of the settlement effected by the Crimean war. How this is to be reconciled with the avowed desire for the destruction of Turkey, applause of Russian aggression and Russian victories, denunciation of whatever English preparations were made, reproaches for not placing blind confidence in the Czar's promises to respect British interests,—it would be tedious and perfectly useless to inquire. The discussion, at all events, raised the important question how far British interests have been adequately protected in the recent settlement; and though what the Duke of Argyll may have had to say upon it may have been wholly inexplicable, having regard to his immediate antecedents, it at least afforded an opportunity to the Minister.

Upon this topic Lord Beaconsfield appeared as the apologist for peace, deprecating the indignant censures of the warlike and anti-Russian Duke. It sounds like a burlesque. All thought of preserving even the semblance of consistency is so completely abandoned that it really excites no surprise when we find the same man at one moment denouncing subservience to Russia, and at another thundering against the slightest preparation to resist, and enforcing the duty of confiding in the promises of the Czar, and of assisting in his beneficent work of liberation. Lord Beaconsfield had actually to explain to the Duke the reasons for not going to war to prevent the taking of Batoum. He first explained that we had prevented the taking of Constanti-

nople; and in that task every one will recollect the Government had the hearty abuse of all sound Liberals. However, it was done; and we also insisted upon the port of Burgas, the finest port in the whole of the Black Sea, being restored to Turkey. And with regard to Batoum, the Treaty of Berlin stipulated that it should be free and an essentially commercial port. Under those circumstances the Minister, not being gifted with all the martial ardour of the Duke of Argyll, and thinking that Russia, with Turkey prostrate at her feet, and her armies at the gates of Constantinople, had conceded all that she could reasonably be required to concede in that particular quarter, acquiesced. It may be a question whether it was right so to do. We ourselves believed at the time, and continue so to think, that it was right. But that the Duke of Argyll should consider that it lies in his mouth to raise the smallest objection, betrays a complete insensibility to the consequences of that conduct in which he himself and his most intimate allies have for years indulged. He denounced also, in the same spirit, the destruction of the Danubian fortresses. Did he wish to hand them over to the Turks? He could not have intended that Russia should have them, for one of the enormities about their demolition was that Russia had proposed it, and we, in a spirit of weak compliance, had conceded it. But the Duke of Argyll, when in his anti-Russian mood, will not hear of the Czar having any claims whatever arising out of his victories over the Turk. In that mood nothing short of the *status quo ante bellum* is for one moment to be accepted. The Ministers as practical men had to consider how far it was absolutely necessary to insist upon cutting

down those claims, and how far it was possible to find equivalents for such as were allowed to hold good. But the Duke will not condescend to discuss either the one or the other. The *status quo ante bellum* as regards Russia must according to him be combined with the total destruction of the Turkish empire in Europe. What should take the place of that empire does not appear; we may, however, take it for granted that England is to guarantee neither security nor reform. She is to stand by and applaud the liberation schemes of military despots, in the happy confidence that, as soon as she has warbled a few ditties in praise of freedom and the rights of self-government, the Turk will be ejected from Europe, the Cossack will return to his lair, and all will be prosperity and peace. It is really humiliating that a Prime Minister should be called on to answer in his place in Parliament such extraordinary and fantastic criticism. It was actually complained, that by the acknowledgment of Servian independence, a great blow had been struck against Turkish power. The imperturbable patience of Lord Beaconsfield for once failed him, and he declared that such a pretence as that now put forward was really trifling with a serious subject.

The whole tone of Lord Beaconsfield's speech was eminently satisfactory. He not merely vindicated the policy of those arrangements which were substituted for the Treaty of Berlin, and by which limits were set to Russian aggrandisement, and at the same time the peace of Europe was preserved; but he dealt with that specious grievance that by our conduct we have necessarily lost the affection and confidence of what were known as the subject-races of Turkey. He pointed out that it was the British

Government which first made proposals with regard to Bosnia and Herzegovina which were afterwards applied to Bulgaria. It was the British Government which first laid down the principle that the chief remedy for the grievances of the subject-populations was to introduce a large system of self-government, and to apply the principle of civil and religious liberty. Those who have read the provisions of the Treaty of Berlin know how largely and universally those principles of the British Government were enforced and applied to the emancipated populations of Turkey. They had been upheld at the Conference at Constantinople, and had been enforced in multitudinous despatches. The policy of autonomy was one which the Conservative party has had consistently at heart; and "no Government," says Lord Beaconsfield, "was so ready, so prepared, or so practical in its propositions by which the welfare of the subject-races and a general reform of the administration of Turkey could be effected, as was the Government of England." It is satisfactory to hear it authoritatively stated, and no doubt it will have to be reiterated again and again in answer to Liberal misrepresentations, that not merely is it the policy of England and Europe to maintain the Sultan's empire as the only barrier against a general war, but both at Berlin and Constantinople, and throughout these long negotiations, in treaties, despatches, and conventions, the British Government has been consistently of opinion "that the only way to strengthen it was to improve the condition of its subjects." The only difference between the two parties is that, while Liberal leaders have merely vomited sentimentalism, the Government have been energetic in action.

But setting aside that portion of the Duke of Argyll's speech which was so extravagantly anti-Russian in its tone and temper, what is the accusation against recent English policy on which he is prepared to challenge the verdict of history? When he is in his anti-Russian mood, nothing will satisfy him but a complete cancelment of the results of the war,—an unreserved return to the *status quo ante bellum*. When he is at the other end of the political tight-rope, it is a source of endless satisfaction to him that the Treaty of Berlin was nothing but a “pale copy” of the Treaty of San Stefano. But between the Treaty of San Stefano and the *status quo ante bellum*, the distance is infinite. While the Government is denounced for allowing that *status* to be altered at all, even after a victorious war, the Opposition is congratulated that for all practical purposes, the Treaty of San Stefano remains intact. We defy anybody to reconcile the two. If the *status quo* was essential, the San Stefano peace was a menace to Europe. If the Berlin Treaty was a mockery and a delusion or deception because it sanctioned disastrous alterations in the *status quo*, how on earth can it be a subject of congratulation to anybody that it reproduced the Treaty of San Stefano? Yet the Duke takes up both positions as easily and comfortably as if they were absolutely identical. He declares that the Turkish empire is ruined, and lies bleeding to death. He rallies the Ministry on the enormous majorities by which they have been steadily supported, and by which the Opposition have been as steadily defeated. The end of it all is, that the Ministers betray their dissatisfaction by their angry and disappointed language and their mortified tone; while “we can afford to smile at your victories and

to laugh at our own defeats.” The whole thing is so utterly incomprehensible to us, that although we have read and re-read this remarkable speech and the still more remarkable volumes which the Duke of Argyll recently published, we cannot for the life of us make out what it is that the Duke wants or would have wished to bring about. The only light in which he presents himself is this: As one of the authors of the Crimean war, he denounces any infringement of the settlement which ended that war; as one of the authors of the Bulgarian agitation, he desires that Turkish power should be extinguished by Russia. But by what conceivable process both wishes are to be carried into effect he never explains. He leaves that as a riddle for any one and every one to solve in his own way. The position is one of some advantage. It gives an Opposition orator an anti-Russian platform or an anti-Turkish platform according to convenience. It gets rid of the necessity of facing any of the difficulties which arise, and hands them over bodily to the Government. It claims credit for insisting upon peace, while it demands that which war alone can give. It denounces preparations for defence, while it censures the smallest concession. The audacity of unreasonableness can no further go.

As we belong to that class of politicians who think that a long and sanguinary war cannot be successfully waged without producing some political results in the way of redistribution of power and territory, we thought that the best policy to pursue was to prevent the war if possible, and if that became a lost hope, to insist upon the terms of peace being made to accord with our rights and interests, and to effect that object peacefully if possible.

We repudiated the San Stefano Treaty: first, because it ignored the rights of the signatory Powers; second, because it placed Turkey at the mercy of Russia. No amount of hostile criticism can get rid of these claims of the Government to the gratitude of the country; that they compelled Russia to submit her treaty to the Congress, to remodel it in accordance with the will of Europe, and to carry into effect the decisions arrived at by the Powers. It was an achievement of first-class magnitude. It has restored England to the primacy on the Continent. It preserved peace, and effected a settlement of the south-east of Europe which all statesmen agree to uphold, and which has every promise of endurance and success. And when it is dinned into the ears of Parliament and the country that that settlement is nothing but a "pale copy" of the San Stefano peace, why is it that for months past its failure has been perpetually predicted? Now that these predictions have signally failed, and even the Duke of Argyll admits his belief that by the 3d of August not a single Russian soldier will be on this side of the Pruth, the impossibility of executing the Treaty is dropped, and in lieu of it the cry is raised that the Treaty itself was "one great political imposture." The Treaty, it is said, pretended to retain something substantial of the Turkish empire, and to resist any substantial gains of Russia; and so far as it pretended to do either the one or the other, it was an imposture. But why did not the Duke of Argyll and his friends find this out sooner? What room was there for predicting its failure if it played so completely into the hands of Russia, the only Power likely to impede its execution. Moreover, the Treaty has throughout been denounced from the

anti-Turkish platform, for the way in which it restored Turkish tyranny, and confounded the liberation schemes of the humane and beneficent Czar. If it were only a "pale copy" of the San Stefano Treaty, those denunciations were mere waste of breath, and the perpetual predictions of its failure were an insult to the understanding of Russian statesmen.

We were glad to observe that Lord Beaconsfield publicly rebuked the manner in which certain unprincipled and reckless members of the Opposition have endeavoured to impede the execution of the Treaty. He excepted Lord Granville and Lord Hartington; "their conduct has at all times, and especially at critical periods, been such as was to be expected from gentlemen and distinguished statesmen who felt the responsibilities of their position." We have no doubt that if at any future time those statesmen should be weighted with the conduct of affairs as arduous and perilous as those of the last four years, the Conservative Opposition of the future will display a like forbearance. Politicians of less than a generation's standing can recall the decided support which in the days of the Crimean war, and of Alabama negotiations, the Conservatives gave to the Throne and Government. Lord Palmerston in the one case, and Mr Gladstone in the other, readily acknowledged it. No Liberal Prime Minister has ever had to rebuke, in the terms employed by Lord Beaconsfield, the language and conduct of "distinguished members of the Opposition" in reference to the solemn treaty engagements of the country. It was much to be regretted, he said, that after so solemn an act as the Treaty of Berlin was executed, and when united Europe had agreed to look upon the Treaty as some assurance

for the maintenance of peace and the general welfare of the world, those distinguished gentlemen "should not once, twice, or thrice, but month after month habitually declare to the world that the Treaty was a thing impracticable, and have used such external influence as they might possess to throw every obstacle and impediment in the way of carrying that Treaty into effect." Such conduct is doubly injurious. It not merely plays into the hands of the opponents of England, and weakens the confidence of allies, but it produces insecurity both at home and abroad. Should these statesmen become by any turn in the wheel of political fortune, the responsible Ministers of the Crown, they would be called upon by those who do not wish that the Treaty should be fulfilled, to give effect to their opinions.

Those tactics are of course, from the nature of the case, ephemeral. When the Treaty is completely executed, these predictions will be forgotten. And the question remains, Was it an imposture from beginning to end? That question must be faced, however inconsistent may be the position of those who put it forward. The Duke of Argyll says that by it Russia recovered the Bessarabian provinces on the Danube, Kars, Batoum, and a large slice of the Asiatic provinces of Turkey, the cumulative effect of which is to make the will of the Russian Government dominant over all the vicinity of the Black Sea and over the population of Armenia. Turkey, on the other hand, has completely lost her independence—her Danubian frontier is gone, her fortresses are destroyed, Servia and Roumania have the power of entrance into the heart of her dominions, Bulgaria in the possession of Sofia turns the Balkans on that side, her future is left in complete

confusion with the most dangerous liabilities to Russia in respect of its war indemnity, and the most dangerous liabilities to this country in respect of its engagements to reform. The Duke of Argyll's remedy would be to restore the Treaty of Paris, erasing from its provisions the Turkish empire in Europe, substituting in its place anything you please to suggest. The fatal objection to it is that it would involve an enormous war, with no allies and with no definite object in view.

The Government view of the case evidently is, that the Treaty of Berlin is as satisfactory a settlement as could have been substituted for the Treaty of Paris without a general war. Most people were astonished that they were able peacefully to obtain so much. That, however, is no vindication of the Treaty, unless its provisions are adequate for the purpose of effecting a settlement of the East, and the maintenance of British rights and interests. We believe that they are adequate for that purpose; and that, being in the nature of a compromise, after years of difficulty and strife we cannot possibly allow it to be tampered with. Its provisions must be carried out, or we stand before Europe defied or cajoled. Then, as to their adequacy. We have argued the matter several times in these pages. It is a subject which will not lose its interest till after the next election; and we shall accordingly quote, if not the words, at all events the substance of the case as it was presented by Lord Beaconsfield. The electors perhaps may require to be reminded that at the time of the San Stefano Treaty the Russian armies were at the gates of Constantinople, occupying the greater part of the east and north of Turkey. "A vast Slav State was to stretch from the Dan-

ube to the *Ægean* shores, extending inwards from Salonica to the mountains of Albania — a State which, when formed, would have crushed the Greek population, exterminated the Mussulmans, and exercised over the celebrated Straits that have so long been the scene of political interest the baneful influence of the Slavs." At the instance of England, and after long resistance, the whole subject was submitted to the jurisdiction of a European congress. That congress, at the instance of England, decreed the retirement of the Russian forces from Turkey; and in consequence they did gradually retire, quitting at last Adrianople and the surrounding district, and are now evacuating Bulgaria and Roumelia. Bulgaria becomes a vassal of the Porte, Roumelia one of its dependent provinces. Thrace, Macedonia, and the littoral of the *Ægean* Sea were restored to the Sultan; the Slav principalities of Servia and Montenegro were restricted within reasonable limits; the disturbed districts of Bosnia and Herzegovina were placed under the administration of Austria, which henceforth acquires a considerable influence in those quarters, and is thus offered as a barrier to Slav aggression. The whole government and constitution of European Turkey have undergone a change on the principles laid down by the British Government. Therefore, so far from the Berlin Treaty being a "pale copy" of the San Stefano arrangement, it completely metamorphosed it. Turkey has found, with this Government, that she cannot repeat the experiment of 1854, and drag us into war at her own time and opportunity. We cannot, every twenty years, waste blood and treasure in that quarter of the world. But with a weak or divided Ministry at home, that is the peril which

perpetually awaits us, and which overwhelmed us under Lord Aberdeen. The Duke of Argyll's tone, that Turkey has in us an ally on whom she cannot depend, and that Russia has only to pursue her policy of aggression and it will be accepted by the English Government, is one to which we have grown accustomed. Language more unbecoming an Englishman, or an English statesman, it is impossible to conceive. Used by men in office, it would inevitably lead to war; used by influential statesmen out of office, it is a serious public difficulty and discredit. It has, however, been very general amongst a certain class of Liberals since 1876. It is to the honour of the Ministry that they have, in spite of it, asserted the control of England over what passes in the East. They have done so thoroughly and completely, and they have succeeded without war. It has been a bloodless triumph of statesmanship, achieved at trifling cost. Both in Europe and in Asia the international settlement has been placed upon stronger and surer foundations; and an enduring peace has been established, with increased guarantees for its continuance, and for the better government of the subject-races.

With regard to Affghanistan, it is difficult to know what is the Duke of Argyll's view. He complains that the Mohammedan agent at Cabul was not trusted; that the conferences between Sir L. Pelly and the late Noor Mahomed were shameful and humiliating to England; that Shere Ali rightly distrusted the good faith and sincerity of the British Government. Lord Beaconsfield refused to follow him into his Affghan speculations and criticisms. Yakoob Khan was still negotiating with the representatives of the Government, and under such circumstances the Duke of Argyll's

Affghan *résumé* of his recent book had better have been omitted. It scarcely tends to advance negotiations, to stimulate Yakooob Khan's feelings of hostility by an exaggerated description of his fancied wrongs. The whole of the extraordinary oration wound up with a compliment to the dignity of Lord Derby's policy, which he described as providing for British interests and nothing else; the very point at which all the invectives of the last few years have been addressed. He then coupled that tribute of admiration with a censure upon the Government for not trusting for the protection of British interests exclusively to the pledges of the Czar, and declared that the effect of the defensive preparations of the Government was that they appeared to be made for the sole purpose of resisting the extension of freedom to the Christians of the east of Europe.

The speech was ill-timed and unexpected. The principal reason for its delivery would seem to be that, having been absent in the Mediterranean, materials had accumulated; and two thick ponderous volumes which his Grace has recently published, have fallen somewhat heavily on the public. It was desirable to publish a short *résumé* of that laborious work in the form of a speech. The book itself will never be read. Life is not long enough or leisured enough for such productions to win success. Politicians can pelt one another with speeches, perhaps with pamphlets, but not to any good purpose with octavo volumes. It was a new feature in political warfare to publish 946 pages of invective and detailed disquisition on the foreign policy of a Cabinet. They will never be accepted as containing a remotely probable version of the

real relations and dealings of this country with either Russia or Afghanistan. But we notice, at all events, that when the Duke was explaining his position with regard to the Crimean war, he intimated that Russia's desire was to constitute herself "sole heir and administrator of the Sick Man's possessions and effects;" that the object of the allies was "that the political destiny of Turkey was to be matter of European, and not specially, still less exclusively, of Russian concern;" that that object was perfectly consistent "with a conviction that Turkey was sinking under internal and *irremediable* causes of decay." Let him apply his own principles in 1854 to the circumstances of 1876-79, and then the *raison d'être* of that ponderous and intricate work would vanish. Let him transfer to the present day the language which he applies to the diplomatic position in 1854, and then his massive volumes may be put in the fire as a useless accumulation of irrelevant matter. "The vices of Turkey," he says, "were for the moment out of view. Her comparative helplessness only was apparent, and in that helplessness lay the danger of Russian success in establishing a dominion which Europe regarded with remarkable jealousy." This danger the Duke of Argyll in office supported, Lord Palmerston in Opposition thwarted, Lord Beaconsfield, in his arduous and resolute endeavour to avert. That danger will again and again recur; and fortunate will it be for this country if those who are called upon to meet it possess the skill and fortitude of Lord Beaconsfield, instead of the Duke of Argyll's infirmity of purpose and vacillating sentimentalism.

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